

HOW CAN AN ON-CALL FIRE DEPARTMENT BEST BE PREPARED TO
MAINTAIN ADEQUATE STAFF LEVELS THROUGH STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT
AND RETENTION AS SUBSTANTIAL TURNOVER IS INEVITABLE WITH
RETIRING BABY-BOOMERS?

Research Proposal

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ABSTRACT

“The challenge today is not just retaining talented people, but fully engaging them, capturing their minds and hearts at each stage of their work lives” (Lockwood, 2007, p.1)

Fire departments throughout the country that rely on protection from on-call personnel are facing difficult times recruiting new members, engaging them, and also retaining them on their workforce. Over the past several decades, the training requirements to become a firefighter have become more demanding and require many hours of training. Today, people that are interested in becoming on-call firefighters are finding it hard to commit to the time needed as there is little time to invest if they are working full-time occupations, parenting, and are involved in other activities.

Through research and analysis, the research team has identified the various struggles that cities and towns are currently facing and has advised the Town of Grafton of some strategies for recruitment and retention in order to prepare a succession plan to maintain adequate work force levels with upcoming retirements being inevitable. The Town should implement targeted strategies to recruit new members and once they are on the roster, ensure that the fire department keeps them engaged so they will want to stay active. In addition to researching the current activities of the fire department in the Town of Grafton, the researchers have collected data from the fire department from the Towns of Spencer, MA and Millbury, MA, which have similar style fire departments. All of the research was designed to answer the question: *how can an on-call fire department best be prepared to maintain adequate staff levels through strategic recruitment and retention as substantial turnover is inevitable?*

INTRODUCTION

SIGNIFICANCE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The background for this research project stems from the Town of Grafton approaching the Clark University MPA program to assess their concern about approaching retirements in the fire department. This is a valuable and much needed assessment and the Town needs to strategize how to recruit and retain their firefighters. They play a very important role in the Town's emergency services. Grafton handles fire protection through an all on-call fire department, which means they have no full-time firefighters. Fire departments are a paramilitary type of organization. There is a chain of command starting with the chief. The chief is responsible for leading the personnel, training, budgeting, fire and medical emergencies, and the everyday operation of the department. He reports to the town manager and board of selectman. Second in command is the deputy chief. He or she usually is in charge of the fire department in the absence of the chief. The deputy chief attends meetings and performs other duties assigned by the chief. At fires, he or she might be in charge of operations, which is putting out fires. The next position in the command chain is assistant chief or district chief. They are usually in charge of a certain section or district of the town. At fires they might be responsible for a certain side of the building, water supply, or rehabbing firefighters when they need a break. The captain is in charge of a station and a company. It could be an engine, ladder or rescue company. He or she is responsible for the firefighters assigned to him and is usually the first one in the building at a fire. Next in line is a lieutenant. They are in charge of the truck when the captain is not there, and would have the same responsibilities. At the bottom of the hierarchy are the firefighters. They are the workers, drivers, and backbone of a fire department. The reason

for the chain of command is to keep everybody from reporting to the chief. This way the chief only has to deal with three or four people. The system works well if everyone does their job properly.

During the year, the on-call firefighters maintain other full-time employment, which could be located out of town, so they may not be available during certain hours of the day. That's why it is so crucial to have as many firefighters as possible on the employee list. The firefighters receive monetary compensation for every call to which an individual responds. The training that is required of the on-call firefighters is the same as a member of the full-time department. One of the problems with retention occurs when a firefighter reaches the age of sixty-five and is required by Massachusetts State Law (M.G.L.A ch. 415 § 2) to retire from the department. The Town is not only losing personnel, but is also losing all the experience and knowledge that these people have acquired over the years. This could be a problem for the Town of Grafton with some of their firefighters approaching retirement age within the next several years. Many small towns like Grafton will suffer a loss in numbers if they do not recruit new and retain current employees.

The Town should be aware of the challenges of recruiting in today's day and age. For instance, less and less people are submitting applications to join on-call departments. Research has found that one reason for the decline in applicants is, since 1986, fire calls have dropped by 3.6 million nationwide. During this same time-frame however, medical calls that are handled by fire departments have increased by 15.2 million (Brown & Urbina, 2014). Today, many of fire department calls are for medical reasons and all fire fighters need to have completed first responder training. Interested recruits find the additional

training required to go on medical calls to be over burdensome. Another reason for a decline in applicants is modern lifestyles, which puts a greater demand on people's lives. The demand today includes the need for both parents to be employed to support the household and also includes the participation in a greater number of extracurricular activities by their children (Hasan Mekouar, 2014). One way to entice people to join an on-call fire department is to offer incentives such as tax breaks, tuition reimbursements, length of service awards, or to develop a citizens' fire academy (KHQA, 2014; University of Pittsburgh, 2009).

In order for small municipalities like Grafton to address the challenges of attracting and retaining employees in the fire department, they must be prepared to implement targeted strategies. It is the goal of the research team to recommend strategies based on data in the surveys that will enable the future success of the Town to attract, engage, and retain employees.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The Town of Grafton, Massachusetts is a small suburban community of 18,000 people located in Central Worcester County, bordering the City of Worcester to the southeast. Its town government offers multiple services for the community ranging from education, to public safety, to public works. It is a community that utilizes on-call members to fulfill the local needs of fire services for its residents and businesses. In addition, the Town outsources Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to a private contractor through a regional agreement with two neighboring communities. The Town faces the same concern as other small towns across the country in that an inability to add to its membership and

also a potential struggle to maintain current members could jeopardize the public safety services for the community.

MANAGEMENT QUESTION

The Town has contacted Clark University regarding this urgent issue and has asked for assistance in identifying specific challenges that the Town is faced with and advise of some recommendations that may strengthen their ability to provide a comfortable membership level to ensure adequate fire services are provided by the Town for its residents.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can an on-call fire department best be prepared to maintain adequate staff levels through strategic recruitment and retention as substantial turnover is inevitable with retiring baby-boomers?

This question will be answered with the help of the literature review, survey data, and recommendations as the researchers aim to find the connection between recruitment and employee retention as it correlates with fire department retirement/turnover issues.

LITERATURE REVIEW

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The fulfillment of fire and emergency services across many communities has undergone a growing reliance on on-call volunteers, which is difficult to sustain. Communities can't rely on members staying active in a volunteer department over long

periods of time due to employment migration, residence relocation, a focus on extracurricular activities, or focus on other volunteerism with less commitment.

To clarify the meaning of a volunteer fire fighting force, the term "volunteer" contrasts with career firefighters who are fully compensated for their services. Some volunteer firefighters may be part of a department that utilizes both full-time and volunteer firefighters. In this way, a station can be regularly staffed for rapid response, while the volunteers provide supplementary staffing before, during, and after an incident, or while the full-time staff are out of service doing training.

The term "volunteer" may also be used in reference to a group of part-time or on call firefighters who may have other occupations when not engaged in occasional firefighting. Although they may have "volunteered" to become members, and to respond to the call for help, they are compensated as employees during the time they are responding to or attending an emergency scene, and possibly for training. An on-call firefighter may also volunteer time for other non-emergency duties as well (training, fundraising, equipment maintenance, etc.).

The purpose of this review is to examine the need for the volunteer fire departments to increase their efforts in recruitment and retention of members. The issue is of utmost importance to the fire service industry as it has been noted that departments that have failed to address the problems and challenges of volunteering in today's world, have been forced to hire career firefighters, consolidate, or even close their doors.

VARIABLES/METHODOLOGY

The literature was identified for possible selection by searching for keywords/search terms including volunteer fire retention, recruitment, and municipal volunteer fire departments. This paper explores ten published articles that report on results from research conducted in various municipalities. The literature that was chosen in these selection criteria was identified by having literature that most effectively identifies with the issues in the Town of Grafton.

In the fall of 2014, the Director of the Masters in Public Administration Program at Clark University, Dr. Susan Yi-Millette, approached the research team to inform them that the Town of Grafton was looking for a student group to assist the Town's fire department in determining if upcoming retirements within the on-call fire department will impact the department's roster size due to recruitment and retention challenges. The team had an initial meeting in December 2014 with Cheryl Barker, Fire Department Administrative Assistant and Michael Gauthier, Fire Chief/Forest Fire Warden.

The 73 members of the Grafton Fire Department were born between the years of 1953 to 1992 and include both males and females. They come from the towns of Grafton, North Grafton, South Grafton, and Upton. Their department ranks include: firefighter, firefighter/EMT, lieutenant, captain, assistant chief, deputy chief, and chief.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES

The research studies chosen for this review included ten articles, which used both quantitative and qualitative methods, typically including solutions to questions, which represented the qualitative aspect of the studies (911 SignalUSA, 2015; Conning, 2014; Raffel, 2013; Fichera, 2014).

RECRUITMENT

Volunteer fire departments struggle with recruitment and retention of active volunteer firefighters (Ameen & Caputo, 2013). Volunteer firefighters can present significant staffing and response challenges if not properly addressed. Most departments perform recruitment activities, but are they effective?

Over the past two years the Virginia Fire Chief's Association and the Environmental Systems Research Institute have studied retention and recruitment practices throughout the commonwealth of Virginia. The program compared traditional recruitment methods over newer technology driven methods (Bayne, 2013).

Traditional methods include events, mailings, posters, school visits, and open houses. GIS (graphic information systems), a technology-driven method, conducted a community level profile and analysis (tapestry report) to identify who best fit the profile for candidates. Also reported was a successful recruitment method that came from a federal grant study in which ten departments recruited using GIS information to plan targeted activities and 10 departments recruited using traditional methods (Ameen & Caputo, 2013).

Using GIS (ESRI) these communities were able to classify neighborhoods into demographic market segments and looked at which segments current firefighters fell into. Each department received a report explaining the demographic information and suggestions for what to do with it.

For each county, the study identified core groups as 1) the groups that most current firefighters are part of and that have an above average chance of being a firefighter; and 2) developmental groups, which some current firefighters are part of but have an above average chance of being a firefighter.

The report gave information about lifestyle characteristics such as eating, shopping and recreation choices for core and developmental groups, so departments can know exactly where to target their efforts (Ameen & Caputo, 2013).

Marketing is also key to recruitment efforts and gains support of local people (Raffel, 2013). It is a cost effective tool and will grow and strengthen their volunteers and encourage support from the local community. Social media and technology advances will connect to the younger population. By identifying the media opportunities in the area, higher visibility will educate the public about volunteer opportunities.

An issue identified was ensuring firefighters know what is expected of them. According to 911 SignalUSA (2015), recruited volunteer firefighters have to know what the expectations and the requirements of volunteering are in a local department, which ensures volunteers who are ready and willing to make the commitment needed for a successful department. Also, diversifying your fire department will help first responders be better prepared to deal with changes in the community. It is important to have diversity in the department, and this should be incorporated into the marketing plan. The concept of diversity in the fire service can be thought of in different ways. Diversity considerations can range from cultural (nationality, religion, and language) to subcultural (age, gender, and community) to individual (personal traits and learning styles). Perspectives regarding the

impact of diversity in the fire service vary from causing adversity and ineffectiveness in the organization to providing a position of strength and success through collective intelligence. Leaders face challenges when introducing or addressing diversity, but their success is critical to the success of the organization. Leadership cannot accomplish any of the organizational goals without the employees' uniting to accomplish the work. The more talent, skills, perspectives, insight, knowledge, and abilities acquired through diversity, the stronger and more effective and competitive the organization will be. In our multicultural society, positively integrating this necessary diverse workforce and meeting the inherent challenges are the duties of leadership (McNeil, 2008).

Recruitment strategies included maintaining an organized website that is useful to attract volunteers. By using video testimonials and social media such as Facebook and Twitter, people will get first-hand information about their local department (Varga, 2015).

Creating a recruitment program in the local high school and holding assemblies to target teenage audiences are great ways to encourage people to volunteer (Raffel, 2013). Many fire departments hold assemblies to target teenage audiences and encourage them to volunteer for the department when they are of age. Fire departments that hold service-learning days provide high school students with hands-on experience, and answer questions that students may have about becoming a volunteer. These explorer programs are created for boys and girls who have an interest in obtaining a fire certification someday. Growing this program in the community could provide a steady stream of volunteers.

Sending out direct mail in the community as a newsletter to list the updated community events that will go directly to residential homes and local businesses can

encourage volunteerism. These can include fire safety tips for residences and give dates of upcoming seminars or events in which the fire department will be answering questions about recruitment (Schroeder, 2015).

RETENTION

The process of retention needs to be an ongoing process and must be managed and executed on a continual basis by establishing policies, procedures and standards, updating bylaws and conducting exit interviews (Ameen & Caputo, 2013).

Motivation is a challenge of a volunteer, and the department needs to have a steady flow of recruitment, but also ensure that the volunteers they have feel that they are making a contribution to the community. Sustaining volunteers depends on how leaders are engaging their department on a regular basis through weekly meetings and other collaboration.

The best way that the department can ensure new members understand the procedures is to have current members train new members (911 SignalUSA, 2015). This also ensures current, satisfied volunteers who can relate positive experiences and encourage others to become involved. Personnel should be fully-trained on department information. If they receive help in training and learn the protocol by a volunteer coordinator, the volunteer remains motivated to be part of the department.

Another way to train volunteers is by enabling multi-agency training, which allows firefighters to understand the services and limitation in their own department. Multi-

agency training can lead to better relationships between first responders in a community (Collins, 2014).

Paying volunteers may not be the answer to better retention. Keeping volunteers motivated includes being recognized for their commitment. This means both within the department and within the community (Markley, 2014).

CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF LITERATURE

Even though these measures mentioned above are being put into effect in communities across the nation, the trend of volunteer firefighters is still decreasing. The research team needed to look for new strategic methods so that the Town of Grafton can improve their recruitment and retention for the department. Therefore, our team needed to search and define different strategies to address and improve the problem.

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING

In the fall of 2014, the Director of the Masters in Public Administration Program at Clark University, Dr. Susan Yi-Millette, approached the research team to inform them that the Town of Grafton was looking for a student group to assist the Town's fire department in determining if upcoming retirements within the on-call fire department will impact the department's roster size due to recruitment and retention challenges. The team had an initial meeting in December 2014 with Cheryl Barker, Fire Department Administrative Assistant and Michael Gauthier, Fire Chief/Forest Fire Warden.

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ANONYMITY

Based on the type of information that was required in order to complete the research, the team opted to conduct an anonymous survey. The survey was designed to collect honest and accurate information in order to make recommendations to the fire department. The team wanted to make sure that the members of the fire department felt that they could speak openly and truthfully. By making the survey anonymous, the team would be able to acquire truthful responses without making employees feel uncomfortable.

The survey was completed ensuring anonymity and the fire department members' participation was voluntary. There was no identifying information collected; the responses could not be traced back to the members and their responses were combined with the other anonymous responses received from the survey. The fire department members could decline to answer any questions that they did not wish to answer and they could drop out of the survey at any time. All data received has been kept confidential. The team also informed the members to not put any information on the survey that would allow them to be identified. The survey was created and sent out via Qualtrics, which is an anonymous online survey tool approved by the Office of Sponsored Programs and the IRB committee at Clark University.

DATA COLLECTION

SURVEY DESIGN

The first step the research team took in planning the survey was to establish the main goal and how this information would be used for the benefit of the study. It was decided that the main goal was to define and describe which sample/population would be accessing the survey. Salant and Dillman (1994) recommend defining a target population as narrowly as possible. Since the background for this research stems from the Town of Grafton having an immediate need to assess their fire department, as a large number of their municipal volunteer firefighters are quickly approaching retirement, the research team determined that Grafton's firefighters would be asked to fill out the survey. To ensure that all fire department employees participated in the survey, the research team chose to name the study, *Grafton Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Survey*.

The Grafton Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Survey was divided into sections which included:

- ❖ Recruitment. Participants were asked what their primary reason was for joining the fire department and given a selection of choices (recruitment).
- ❖ Engagement. Participants responded to a range of recommended Gallop Poll questions (Gallop, 2012) along with satisfaction of fire department services.
- ❖ Retention. Participants were asked for their reasons for staying active with the fire department (See Appendix B, Survey Instrument).

Isaac and Michael (1997) encouraged the use of data collection tools to facilitate data review and formulation. Online surveys have increasingly become more popular over other means of interviewing. Online surveys are convenient for participants to take on their own time and at their own pace and are less biased than personal interviews and

hand-written surveys. In order for the survey to meet the goals of the study, the team decided to contact participants via an online anonymous survey where questions were presented through a software program entitled Qualtrics. According to Information Week, “Qualtrics dominates academic survey research” (Carr, 2013). The responses were recorded in the software and stored with the option to create valuable charts and measures.

Glasgow (2005) affirmed that survey design is highly important to the research (see Figure 1). Both questions and choice of responses must be clear to the participant and the researcher. There should be no room for misinterpretation. Survey questions should not be combined where a participant can answer positively for one part and negatively for another part. Research has shown that in order for a survey to be successful, it is essential to design it in a way that is easily understood. Questions should not ask for data that the participants know nothing about or don’t have (Salant & Dillman, 1994). Iarossi (2006) recommended using language that is simple in both words and phrases. Words should be familiar to the participant. As the researchers designed the survey, they reviewed each question thoroughly along with their advisor.

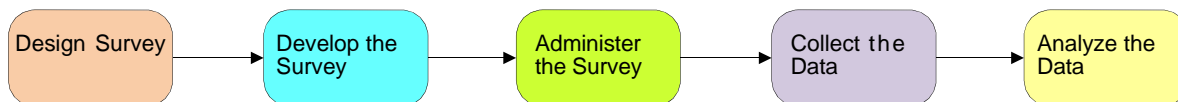


Figure 1. Survey Design Process

Glasow (2005) also recommended the use of open-ended survey questions to allow participants to respond in their own words. Not only are open-ended questions useful to allow insight into otherwise unknown areas, but can help when the researchers are not

familiar with the study area. Open-ended questions offer free response as to what is on the participant's mind. These questions work well when asking for feelings, likes and dislikes, opinions, or additional comments. Salant and Dillman (1994) stated that open-ended questions can sometimes be challenging for participants to answer.

Brace (2004) claimed that there are downsides to open-ended questions such as (1) difficulty expressing feelings, which results in "I don't know" or skipping the question, (2) there is a larger skip rate, and (3) analyzing comments can be time consuming and extremely difficult (p. 55-62). For this reason, the research team decided to limit open-ended questions to ensure adequate response time, to make the survey as "user-friendly" as possible, and to allow for ease in comparing the data.

ICMA (2009) and Fowler (1995) recommended offering a "no response," "don't know," or "N/A" option for most questions. SurveyMonkey (2009) adds "not applicable" and N/A answer choices in matrix-rating questions. By allowing participants to opt-out due to non-familiarity with the question or if it does not apply to their situation, helps increase the response rate and quality of the collected data (Iarossi, 2006). For reasons of accuracy, the researchers added a "N/A" answer for all questions with scales (on a scale of 1 to 5...) thus offering the participants an option to state they don't know or have no experience which would otherwise have forced them to answer a question resulting in inaccurate data.

A pilot test is one of the most important steps in administering the survey. According to Iarossi (2006), not pre-testing could jeopardize the accuracy of the data. A pilot test evaluates the contents of the survey, the length of the time to complete the survey, and the quality of the researchers (p.89). For the purpose of this survey, the

research team conducted a pilot test through peer members which aided in determining response time, interpretation of questions, ease of administration, and ease of response.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

On Wednesday, January 14, 2015, the researchers submitted their anonymous application for projects with human participants to the Clark University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) for approval. The IRB is responsible for ensuring that research conducted by students (and faculty and staff) protects the rights and welfare of research participants (human subjects). All research is expected to follow safeguards that the University has established. The IRB provided valuable feedback by recommending limiting the number of researcher emails to just the primary investigators; using boldface type on the focus of the study; and including an introduction to the study, as well as a reminder of anonymity and the researchers' contact info on the first screen before the study questions began. The research team was given approval to begin research on January 26, 2015 via an email from the IRB.

CLIENT APPROVAL

The researchers, along with the Town of Grafton administration and fire department administration had been in continuous contact throughout the research project process. Emails and in-person meetings helped to define the Town's needs and were instrumental in facilitating the survey. Modifications were made to the survey based on recommendations from the Town. Along with the partnership with the Town of Grafton, the researchers developed extensive collaborations with two other towns, Spencer and Millbury. It was through these collaborations that prior town surveys were allowed access

to and reviewed. Once the Town of Grafton was assured of anonymity of the survey, the researchers received final approval.

SURVEY DELIVERY

The Grafton Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Survey was sent to 73 firefighters by Cheryl Barker, Fire Department Administrative Assistant, via email on February 5, 2015. Ms. Barker's email contained a link which when clicked on, brought the participants to the researchers' survey created through Qualtrics, Clark University's approved anonymous online survey software. Two weeks were allowed for participant response time, as well as an additional two weeks extension. Ms. Barker sent out an email reminder after the first two weeks, and later provided a face-to-face reminder during an EMT class one week later. Participants were given the opportunity of opting-out of questions that could have been uncomfortable for them (or chose not to answer). By giving the participants the option of opting-out of questions, the researchers hoped to obtain more responses and honest feedback.

SURVEY RESPONSES

Of the 73 participants that were emailed the survey, 49 responses were received by the deadline. If any participants tried to take the survey after the deadline, they would receive an email thanking them for their interest in participating, but letting them know the survey had been closed. The 49 responses collected out of 73 potential participants, represent a response rate of 66%. Given that online surveys are expected to have a 30% average response rate (Hamilton, 2003), the response rate is positioned on the higher end.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Whereas Glasow (2005) recommends the use of open-ended survey questions, he contradicts himself later in his article by recommending *not* using open-ended responses due to the difficulty in analyzing the results. Although the researchers added four open-ended questions to the Grafton Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Survey, the data most likely would not be used due to the difficulty in evaluating the results because of the broad range of responses by the participants. Identifying a procedure for the researchers to analyze the results would be a limitation of the researchers as this is too difficult to quantify. Even though the results of the open-ended questions might have added some validity to the study, the researchers chose to dissect this data out of the survey due to the abovementioned limitations, as well as the restrictive timeline needed to complete the study.

The researchers also noted there were biased answers. For example, when given a selection of reasons participants would leave the fire department, “trainings” was not entered as a response, however, when asked the same participant what improvements they’d like to see in the department (open-ended), “trainings” was typed in. Bell (1996) noted that biases might occur, either in the lack of response from a participant or in the accuracy of the responses received. The researchers consider this a weakness in their survey.

Lastly, because participants were given the option to opt-out of questions, some questions were intentionally and possibly inadvertently skipped. Research recommends not having the ability to opt-out of questions (Salant & Dillman, 1994), however, the

researchers, the IRB Chair, and fire department staff agreed that for higher participation, opt-out questions would be included.

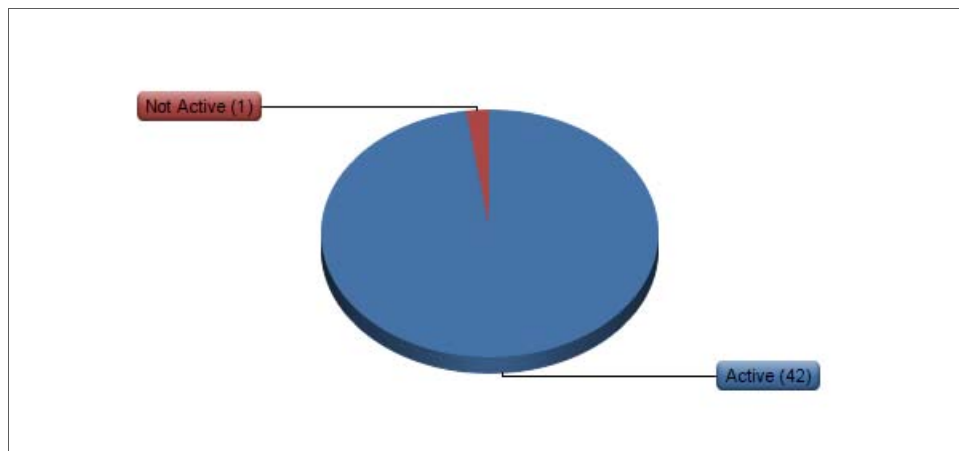
DATA ANALYSIS

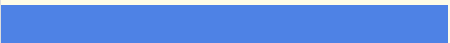

Below is an analysis of the data the research team collected from their anonymous survey. The 39 survey questions were framed around recruitment, engagement, and retention. The Team chose to ask these specific questions in order answer their hypothesis and to be able to provide recommendations to the fire department and the Town of Grafton.

1. What is your on-call status?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 98% are active and 2% are not active.

Figure 1, a-c



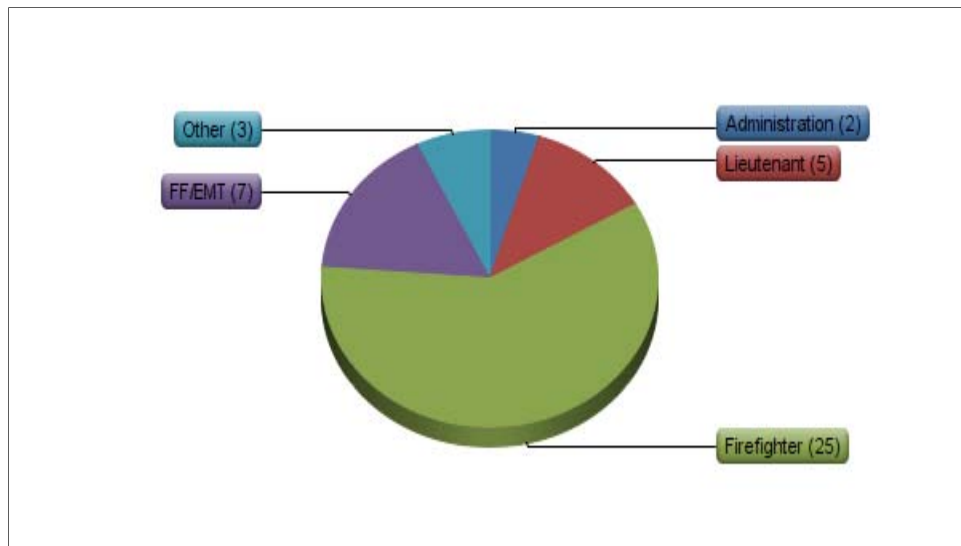
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Active		42	98%
2	Not Active		1	2%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.02
Variance	0.02
Standard Deviation	0.15
Total Responses	43

2. What is your level of service/rank?

Of the 42 fire department members that responded, 60% are firefighters, 17% are firefighters/EMTs, 12% are lieutenants, 7% listed themselves as other, and 5% are members of the administration.

Figure 2, a-c



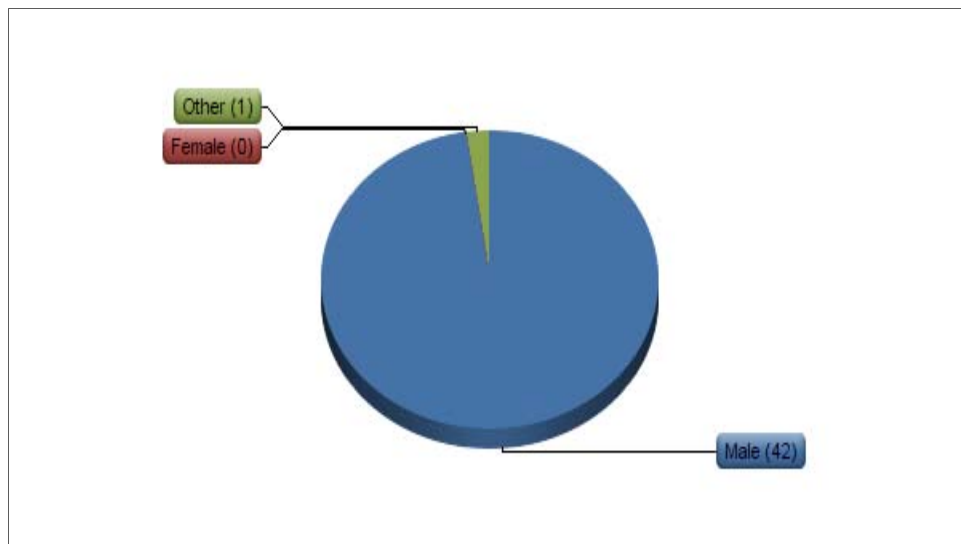
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Administration	2	5%
2	Lieutenant	5	12%
3	Firefighter	25	60%
4	FF/EMT	7	17%
5	Other	3	7%
	Total	42	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	3.10
Variance	0.77
Standard Deviation	0.88
Total Responses	42

3. What is your gender?

Of the 42 fire department members that responded, 98% are male and 2% identify themselves as other.

Figure 3, a-c



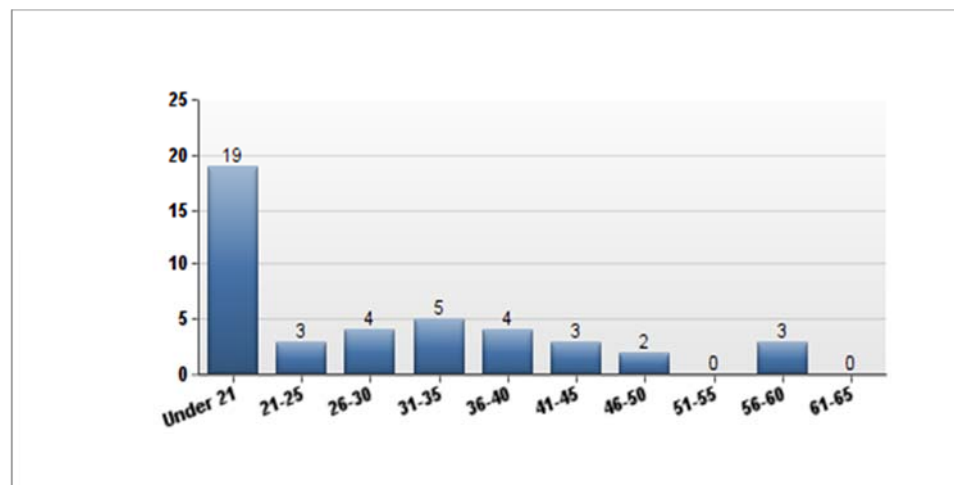
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Male		42	98%
2	Female		0	0%
3	Other		1	2%
	Total		43	100%

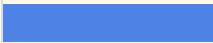







Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	1.05
Variance	0.09
Standard Deviation	0.30
Total Responses	43

4. What was your start age?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 44% started at 21 and under while the other 56% started over the age of 21.

Figure 4, a-c



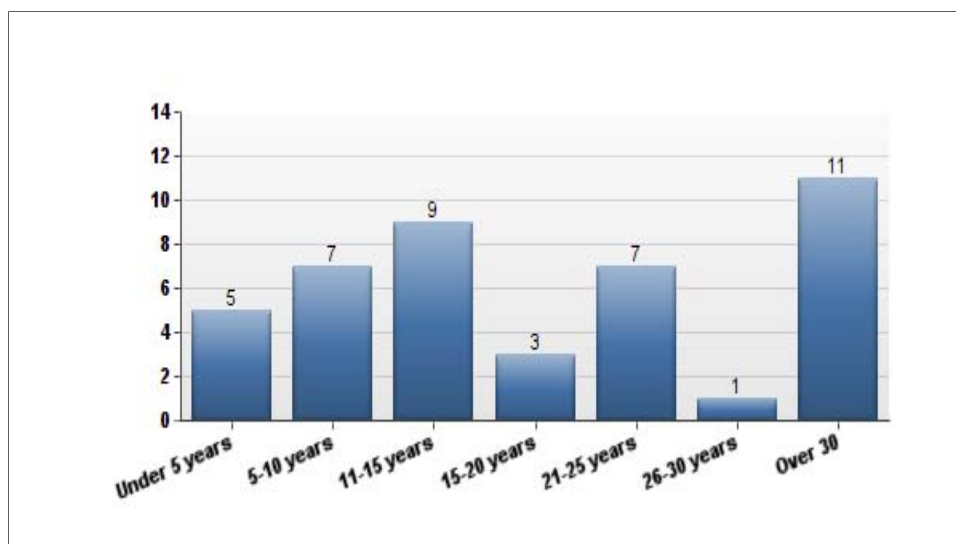
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Under 21		19	44%
2	21-25		3	7%
3	26-30		4	9%
4	31-35		5	12%
5	36-40		4	9%
6	41-45		3	7%
7	46-50		2	5%
8	51-55		0	0%
9	56-60		3	7%
10	61-65		0	0%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	9
Mean	3.16
Variance	6.33
Standard Deviation	2.52
Total Responses	43

5. How many years of service (total or to-date) do you have?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 26% have over thirty years of service while 74% have less than 30 years of service.

Figure 5, a-c



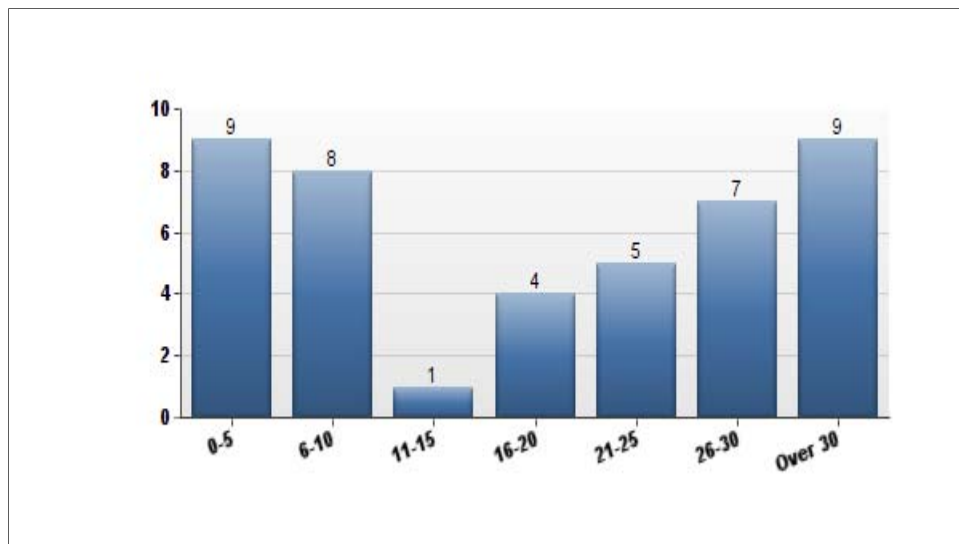
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Under 5 years	<div></div>	5	12%
2	5-10 years	<div></div>	7	16%
3	11-15 years	<div></div>	9	21%
4	15-20 years	<div></div>	3	7%
5	21-25 years	<div></div>	7	16%
6	26-30 years	<div></div>	1	2%
7	Over 30	<div></div>	11	26%
	Total		43	100%


Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	4.09
Variance	4.56
Standard Deviation	2.14
Total Responses	43

6. In how many years do you plan on retiring?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 21% plan on retiring between 0-5 years, 21% plan on retiring in over 30 years, and 58% plan on retiring between 6-30 years.

Figure 6, a-c



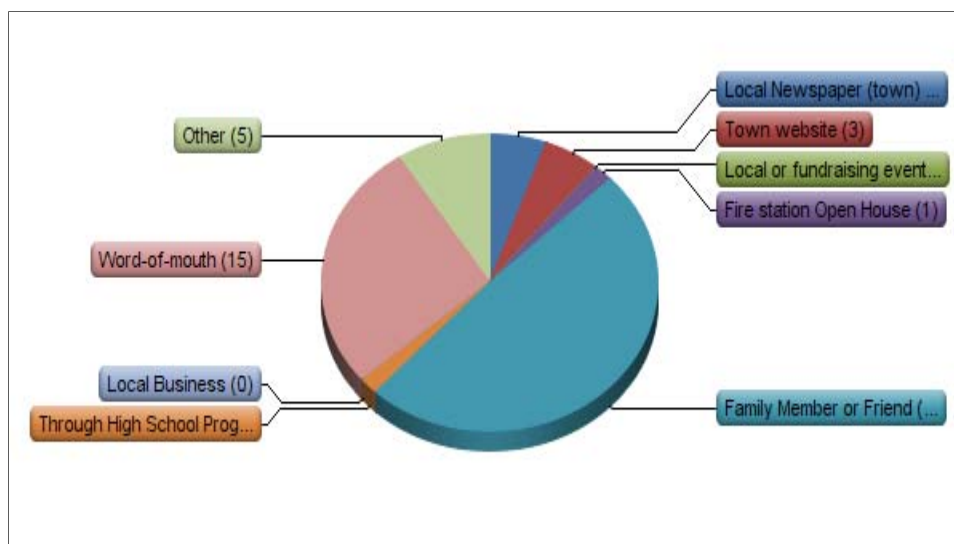
#	Answer		Response	%
1	0-5		9	21%
2	6-10		8	19%
3	11-15		1	2%
4	16-20		4	9%
5	21-25		5	12%
6	26-30		7	16%
7	Over 30		9	21%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	4.05
Variance	5.43
Standard Deviation	2.33
Total Responses	43

7. How did you hear about the Grafton Fire Department and the opportunity to join?
(Please check all that apply)

Of the 44 fire department members that responded, 61% heard about the fire department from family members of friends, while 34% heard about the department from word of mouth. The other 5% heard about the department from the local newspaper, town website, fire station open house, high school program, or through another source.

Figure 7, a-c



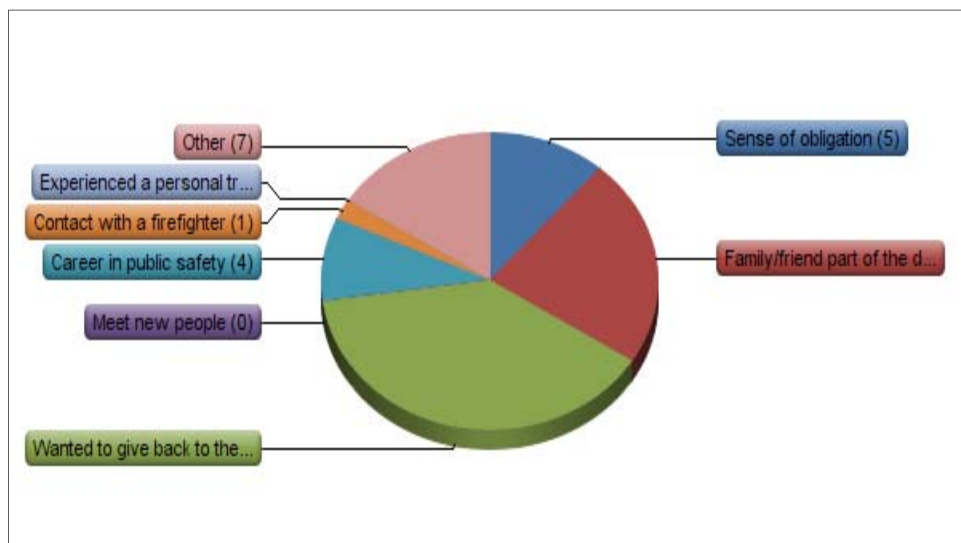
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Local Newspaper (town)	3	7%
2	Town website	3	7%
3	Local or fundraising event	0	0%
4	Fire station Open House	1	2%
5	Family Member or Friend	27	61%
6	Through High School Program	1	2%
7	Local Business	0	0%
8	Word-of-mouth	15	34%
9	Other	5	11%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	9
Total Responses	44








8. Why did you join the department (primary reason)?

Of the 44 fire department members that responded, 39% joined the fire department because they wanted to give back to the community, while 23% joined the fire department because of a family member or friend. The other 38% joined the fire department because they had a sense of obligation, they wanted a career in public safety, they had contact with a firefighter, or for other reasons.

Figure 8, a-c



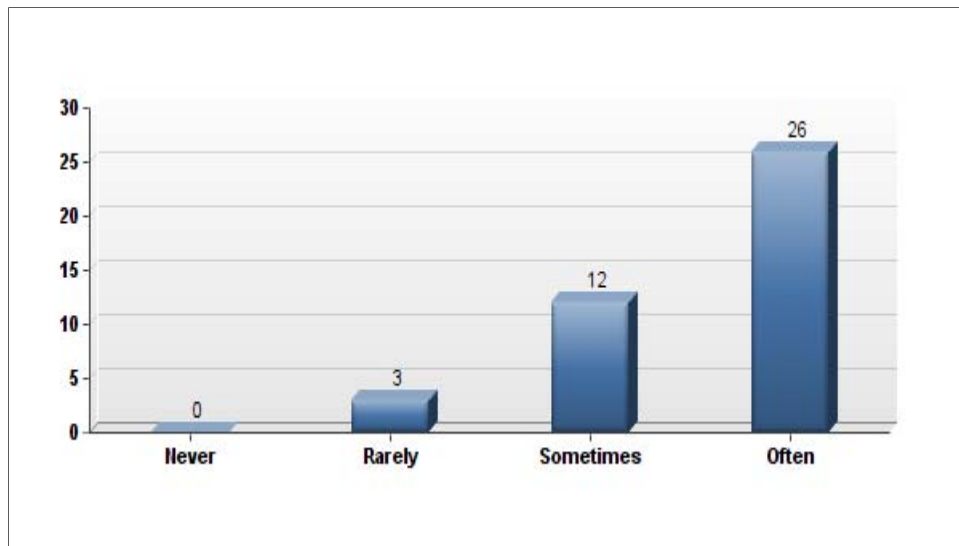
Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	8
Mean	3.59
Variance	4.99
Standard Deviation	2.23
Total Responses	44

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Sense of obligation		5	11%
2	Family/friend part of the department		10	23%
3	Wanted to give back to the community		17	39%
4	Meet new people		0	0%
5	Career in public safety		4	9%
6	Contact with a firefighter		1	2%
7	Experienced a personal tragedy		0	0%
8	Other		7	16%
	Total		44	100%

9. Do you know what is expected from you at work?

Of the 41 fire department members that responded, 63% often know what is expected from them at work, while 29% sometimes know. The other 7% rarely know what is expected from them at work.

Figure 9, a-c



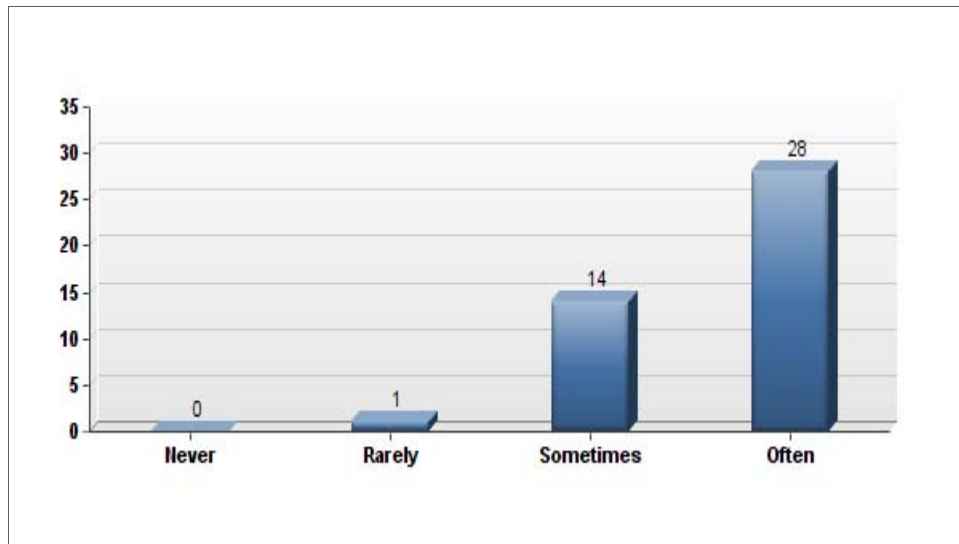
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		0	0%
2	Rarely	<div></div>	3	7%
3	Sometimes	<div></div>	12	29%
4	Often	<div></div>	26	63%
	Total		41	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	4
Mean	3.56
Variance	0.40
Standard Deviation	0.63
Total Responses	41

10. Do you have the materials and equipment you need in order to complete your work correctly?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 65% said they often have the materials and equipment they need in order to complete their work correctly, while 33% sometimes do. The other 2% rarely have the equipment they need in order to complete their work correctly.

Figure 10, a-c



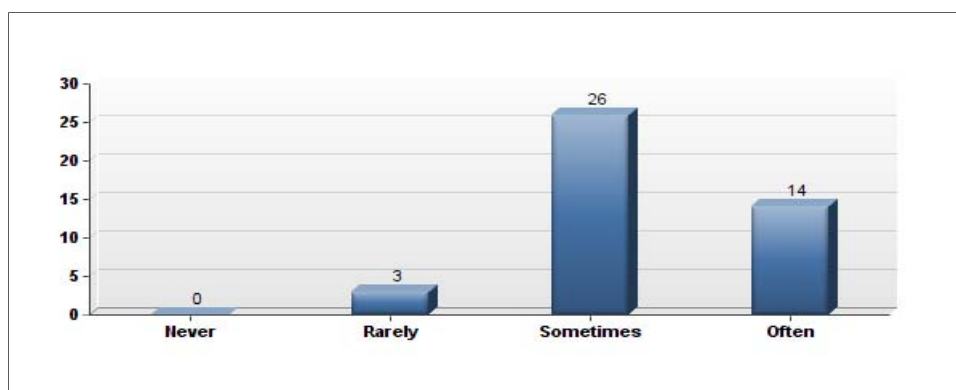
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		0	0%
2	Rarely		1	2%
3	Sometimes		14	33%
4	Often		28	65%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	4
Mean	3.63
Variance	0.29
Standard Deviation	0.54
Total Responses	43

11. At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 60% sometimes have the opportunity to do what they do best every day, while 33% often do. The other 7% rarely have the daily opportunity to do what they do best every day.

Figure 11, a-c



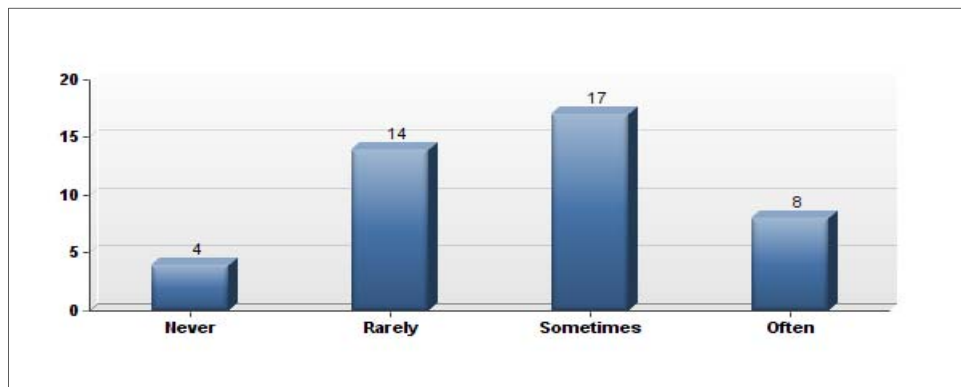
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	0	0%
2	Rarely	3	7%
3	Sometimes	26	60%
4	Often	14	33%
	Total	43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	4
Mean	3.26
Variance	0.34
Standard Deviation	0.58
Total Responses	43

12. Have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 40% sometimes received recognition or praise for doing good work, while 33% rarely do. 19% often received recognition or praise for doing good work and 9% never do.

Figure 12, a-c



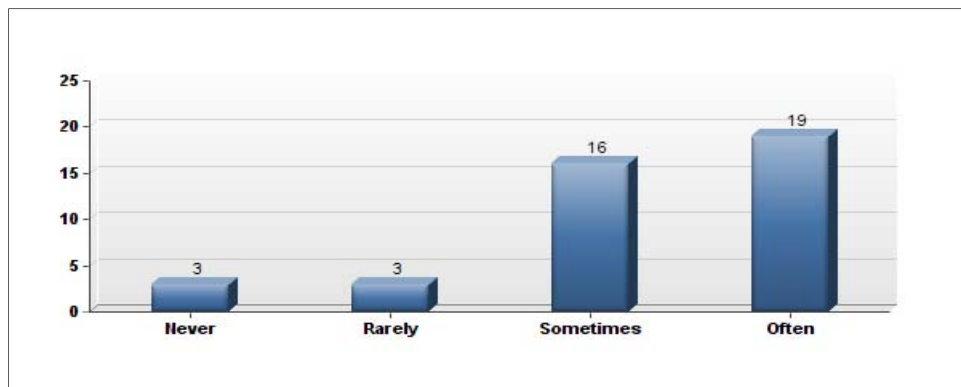
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	4	9%
2	Rarely	14	33%
3	Sometimes	17	40%
4	Often	8	19%
	Total	43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.67
Variance	0.80
Standard Deviation	0.89
Total Responses	43

13. Does your supervisor, or someone at work, care for you as a person?

Of the 41 fire department members that responded, 46% feel that their supervisor or someone at work cares for them as a person, while 36% feel that sometimes they are cared for. The other 14% feels as though they are never or rarely cared for by a supervisor or someone at work.

Figure 13, a-c



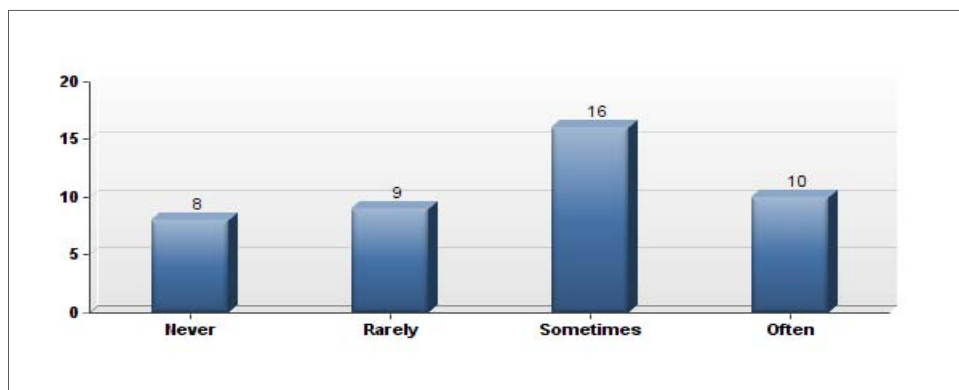
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	3	7%
2	Rarely	3	7%
3	Sometimes	16	39%
4	Often	19	46%
	Total	41	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	3.24
Variance	0.79
Standard Deviation	0.89
Total Responses	41

14. Is there someone at work who encourages your development?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 60% feel that there is often or sometimes someone at work who encourages them, while 40% feel as though they never or rarely have someone at work who encourages them.

Figure 14, a-c



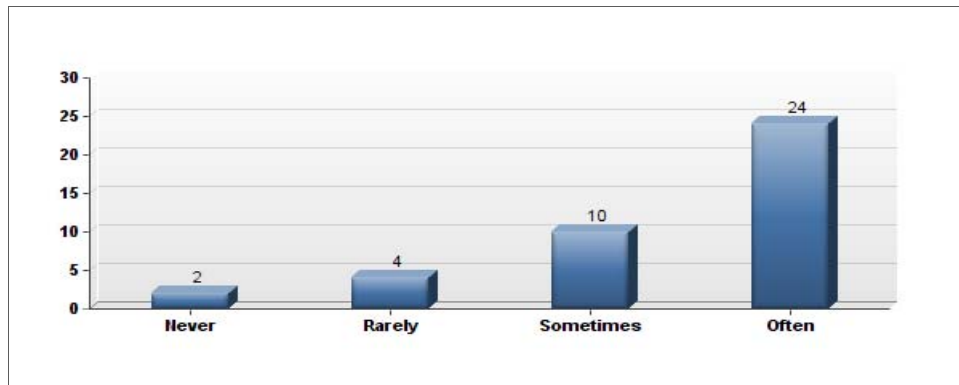
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never	<div style="width: 19%;"></div>	8	19%
2	Rarely	<div style="width: 21%;"></div>	9	21%
3	Sometimes	<div style="width: 37%;"></div>	16	37%
4	Often	<div style="width: 23%;"></div>	10	23%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.65
Variance	1.09
Standard Deviation	1.04
Total Responses	43

15. Does the mission or purpose of your organization make you feel that your job is important?

Of the 40 fire department members who responded, 85% feel that often or sometimes the mission or purpose of the department makes them feel that their job is important, while 15% feel that never or rarely the mission or purpose of the department makes them feel that their job is important.

Figure 15, a-c



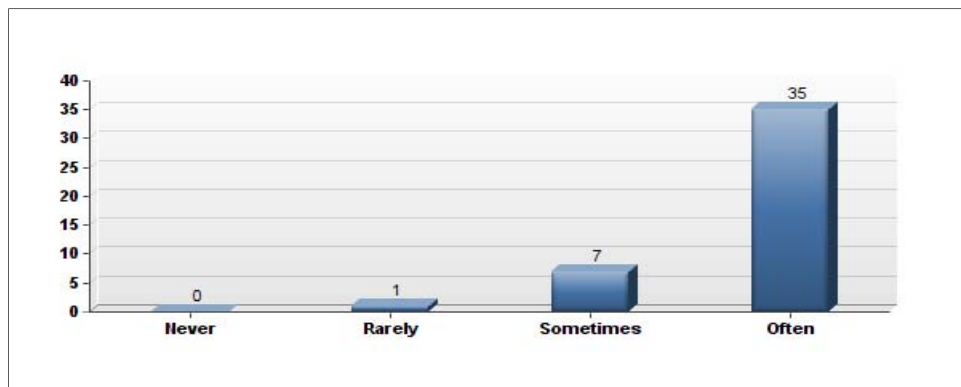
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	2	5%
2	Rarely	4	10%
3	Sometimes	10	25%
4	Often	24	60%
	Total	40	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	3.40
Variance	0.76
Standard Deviation	0.87
Total Responses	40

16. Are your associates or fellow employees committed to doing quality work?

Of the 43 fire department members that responded, 97% feel that their associates or fellow employees are often or sometimes committed to doing quality work, while 2% feel as though their associates or fellow employees are not committed to doing quality work.

Figure 16, a-c



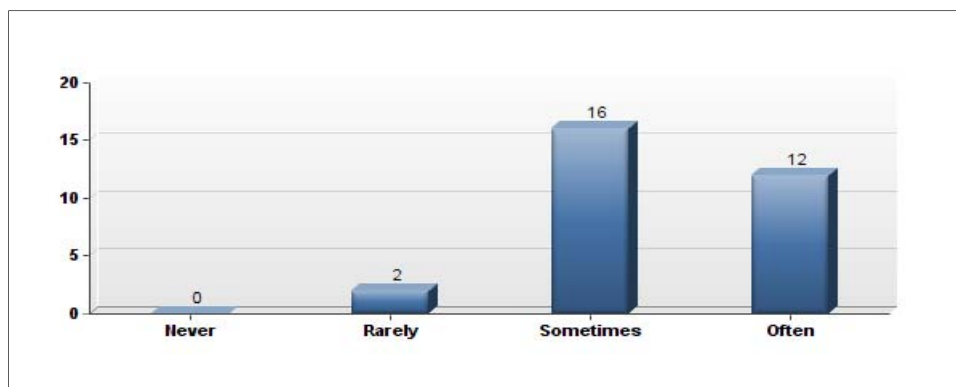
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	0	0%
2	Rarely	1	2%
3	Sometimes	7	16%
4	Often	35	81%
	Total	43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	4
Mean	3.79
Variance	0.22
Standard Deviation	0.47
Total Responses	43

17. Do you have a best friend at work?

Of the 30 fire department members who responded, 93% feel as though they sometimes or often have a best friend at work, while 7% felt as though they don't have a best friend at work.

Figure 17, a-c



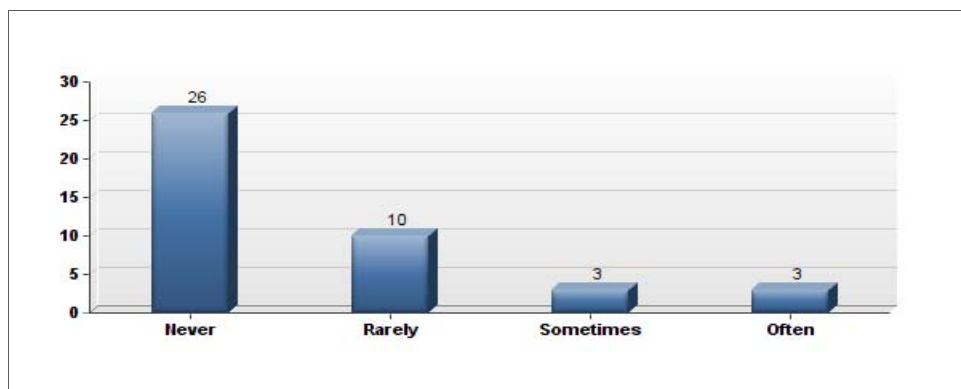
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	0	0%
2	Rarely	2	7%
3	Sometimes	16	53%
4	Often	12	40%
	Total	30	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	4
Mean	3.33
Variance	0.37
Standard Deviation	0.61
Total Responses	30

18. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?

Of the 42 fire department members who responded, 62% have never been talked to about their progress at work over the past six month, while 24% have rarely been spoken to about their progress. 14% have often or sometimes been spoken to about their progress over the past six months at work.

Figure 18, a-c



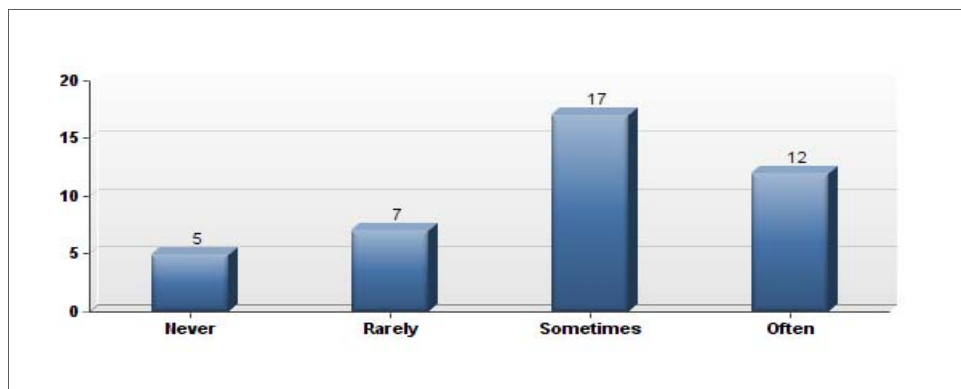
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never	<div style="width: 62%;"></div>	26	62%
2	Rarely	<div style="width: 24%;"></div>	10	24%
3	Sometimes	<div style="width: 7%;"></div>	3	7%
4	Often	<div style="width: 7%;"></div>	3	7%
	Total		42	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	1.60
Variance	0.83
Standard Deviation	0.91
Total Responses	42

19. Within the last year, have you had the opportunities at work to learn and grow?

Out of the 41 fire department members who responded, 29% have often had an opportunity at work to learn or grow within the last year, while 41% have sometimes had the same opportunity. 29% have never or rarely had the opportunity to grow or learn at work over the past year.

Figure 19, a-c



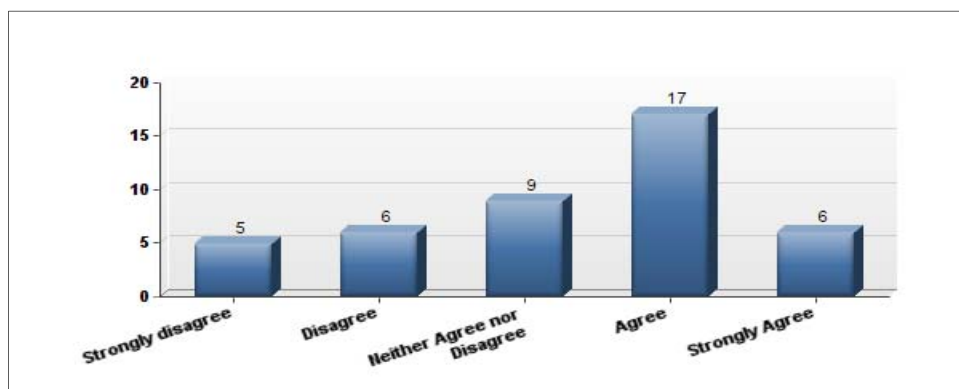
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	5	12%
2	Rarely	7	17%
3	Sometimes	17	41%
4	Often	12	29%
	Total	41	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.88
Variance	0.96
Standard Deviation	0.98
Total Responses	41



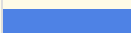


20. I can have in-depth discussions with other fire department members about issues facing the department/company and potential ways to address those issues.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 54% strongly agree or agree that they are able to have in-depth discussion with of members of the department about issues facing the department, while 21% neither agree nor disagree about have in-depth discussions. 26% strongly disagree or disagree that they can have in-depth discussions with their co-works about issues facing the department.

Figure 20, a-c



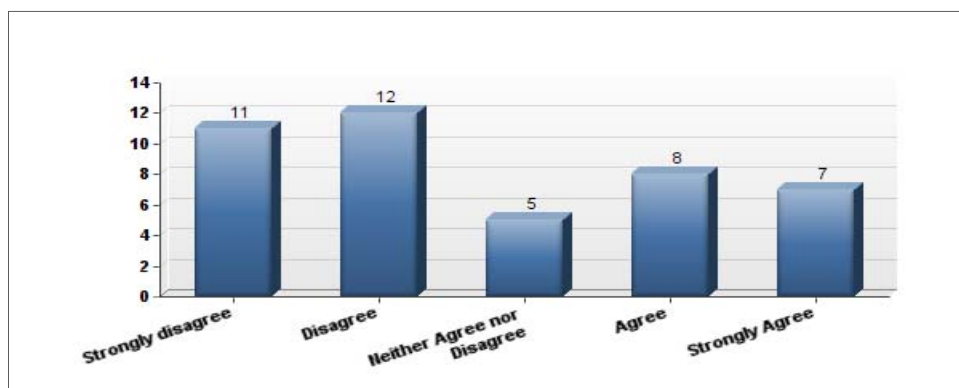
Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	3.30
Variance	1.50
Standard Deviation	1.23
Total Responses	43

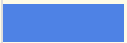




#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		5	12%
2	Disagree		6	14%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		9	21%
4	Agree		17	40%
5	Strongly Agree		6	14%
	Total		43	100%

21. I can talk openly with the Fire Chief about issues faced by the department.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 54% strongly disagree or disagree that they can talk openly with the Fire Chief about issues facing the department, while 35% agree or strongly agree. 12% neither agree nor disagree about talking opening about issues in the department with the Fire Chief.

Figure 21, a-c



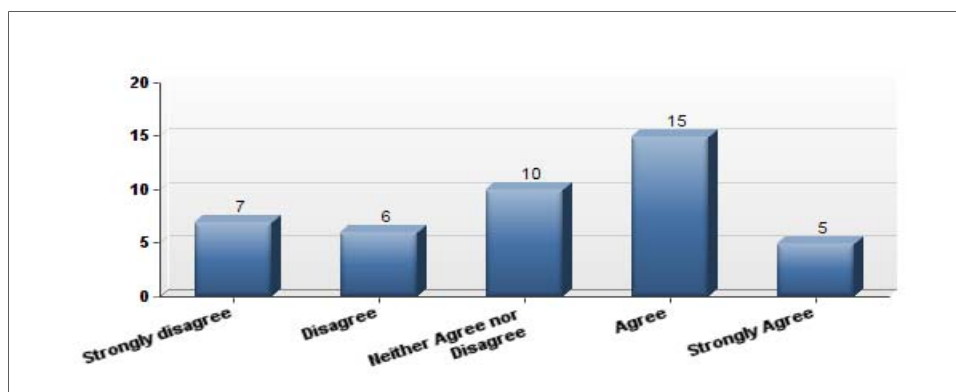
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		11	26%
2	Disagree		12	28%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		5	12%
4	Agree		8	19%
5	Strongly Agree		7	16%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	2.72
Variance	2.11
Standard Deviation	1.45
Total Responses	43

22. I can talk openly with other leaders about issues faced by the department.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 47% agree or strongly agree that they are able to speak opening with leaders about issues the department is facing, while 23% neither agree nor disagree. 30% strongly disagree or disagree that they are able to speaking opening with leaders about issues the department is facing.

Figure 22, a-c



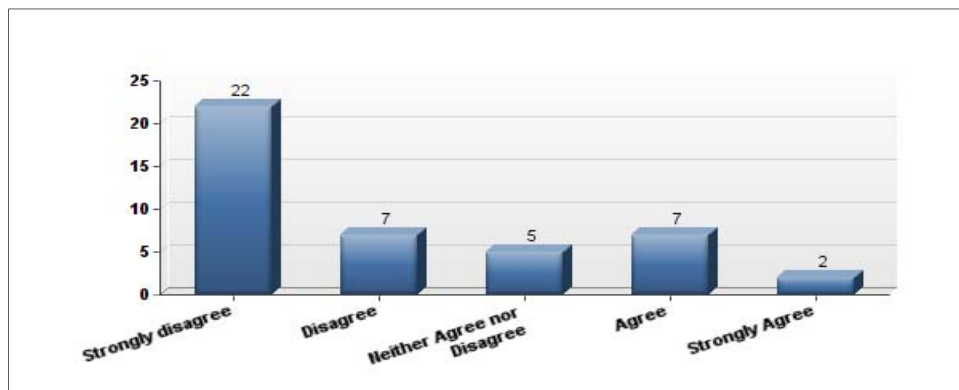
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree	<div></div>	7	16%
2	Disagree	<div></div>	6	14%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	<div></div>	10	23%
4	Agree	<div></div>	15	35%
5	Strongly Agree	<div></div>	5	12%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	3.12
Variance	1.63
Standard Deviation	1.28
Total Responses	43

23. Solutions to department-wide issues and major decisions are arrived at through discussion and consensus, rather than one or two people making decisions for the entire fire department.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 67% strongly disagree or disagree that solutions to department wide issues and major decisions are arrived at through discussion and consensus, while 12% neither agree nor disagree. 21% agree or strongly agree that solutions to department wide issues and major discussion are arrived at through discussion and consensus.

Figure 23, a-c



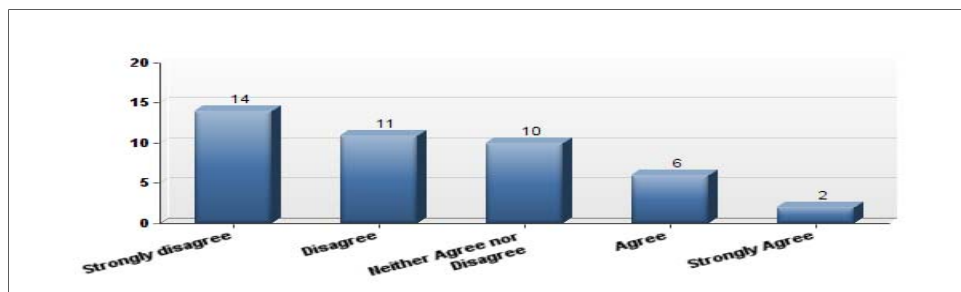
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree	<div></div>	22	51%
2	Disagree	<div></div>	7	16%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	<div></div>	5	12%
4	Agree	<div></div>	7	16%
5	Strongly Agree	<div></div>	2	5%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	2.07
Variance	1.73
Standard Deviation	1.32
Total Responses	43

24. Expectations are clearly communicated, and constructive feedback on performance is provided on a regular basis, both informally and formally.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 59% strongly disagree or disagree that expectations are clearly communicated, and constructive feedback on performance is provided on a regular basis, both informally and formally, while 23% neither agree nor disagree. 19% agree or strongly agree that expectations are clearly communicated, and constructive feedback on performance is provided on a regular basis, both informally and formally.

Figure 24, a-c



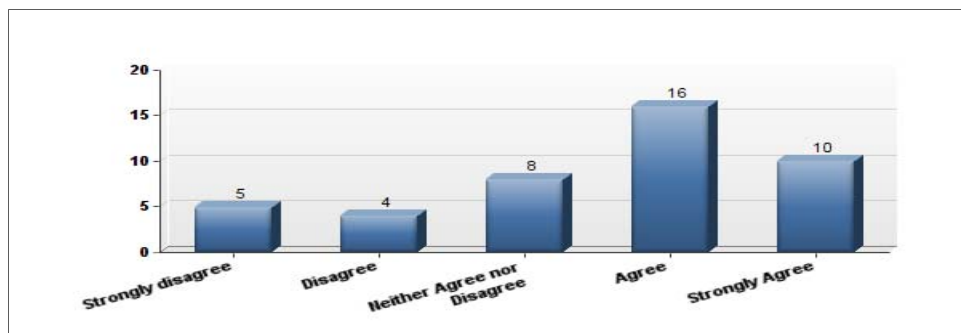
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Strongly disagree	14	33%
2	Disagree	11	26%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	23%
4	Agree	6	14%
5	Strongly Agree	2	5%
	Total	43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	2.33
Variance	1.46
Standard Deviation	1.21
Total Responses	43

25. I find the trainings are relevant and valuable to the work we do in the department.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 60% agree or strongly agree that training are relevant and valuable to the work they do in the department, while 19% neither agree nor disagree. 21% strongly disagree or disagree that the training are relevant and valuable to the work they do in the department.

Figure 25, a-c



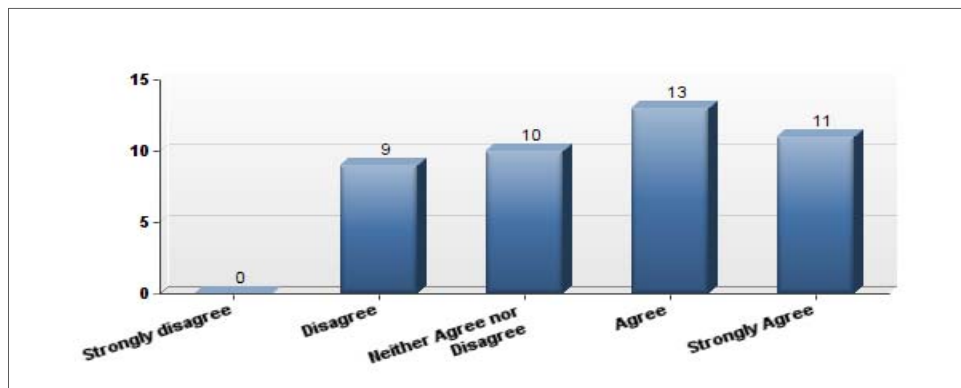
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree	<div style="width: 12%;"></div>	5	12%
2	Disagree	<div style="width: 9%;"></div>	4	9%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	<div style="width: 19%;"></div>	8	19%
4	Agree	<div style="width: 37%;"></div>	16	37%
5	Strongly Agree	<div style="width: 23%;"></div>	10	23%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	3.51
Variance	1.64
Standard Deviation	1.28
Total Responses	43

26. As a department, we understand and trust one another.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 56% agree or strongly agree that they trust and understand one another as a department, while 23% neither agree nor disagree. 21% disagree that they trust and understand one another as a department.

Figure 26, a-c



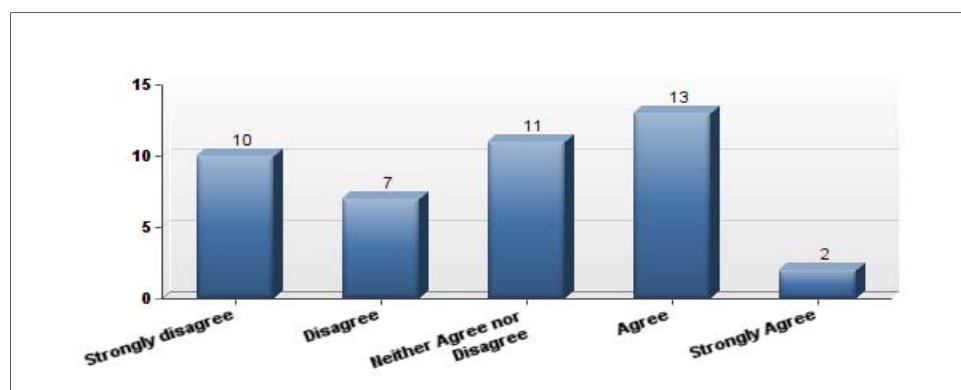
Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	5
Mean	3.60
Variance	1.20
Standard Deviation	1.09
Total Responses	43

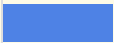

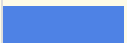


#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		0	0%
2	Disagree		9	21%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		10	23%
4	Agree		13	30%
5	Strongly Agree		11	26%
	Total		43	100%

27. Chief and company leaders actively work towards making everyone feel like an integral part of the team.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 39% strongly disagree or disagree that the Chief and company leaders work towards making everyone feel like an integral part of the team, while 26% neither agree nor disagree. 35% agree or strongly agree that the Chief and company leaders make everyone feel like an integral part of the team.

Figure 27, a-c



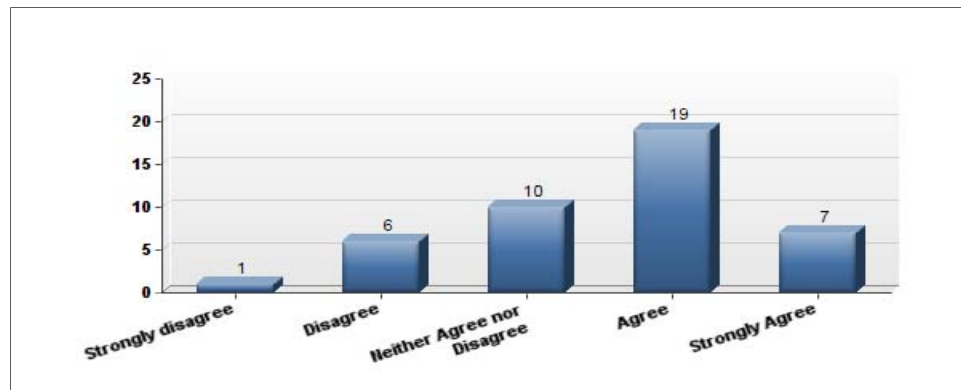
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		10	23%
2	Disagree		7	16%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		11	26%
4	Agree		13	30%
5	Strongly Agree		2	5%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	2.77
Variance	1.56
Standard Deviation	1.25
Total Responses	43

28. I feel that my service is appreciated not just by the department, but by the entire community.

Of the 43 fire department members who responded, 60% agree or strongly agree that their service is appreciated by the department and the entire community, while 23% neither agree nor disagree. 16% strongly disagree or disagree that their service is appreciated by the department and the entire community.

Figure 28, a-c



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Strongly disagree	1	2%
2	Disagree	6	14%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	23%
4	Agree	19	44%
5	Strongly Agree	7	16%
	Total	43	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	3.58
Variance	1.01
Standard Deviation	1.01
Total Responses	43

29. What do you like best about the department? (Open-ended)

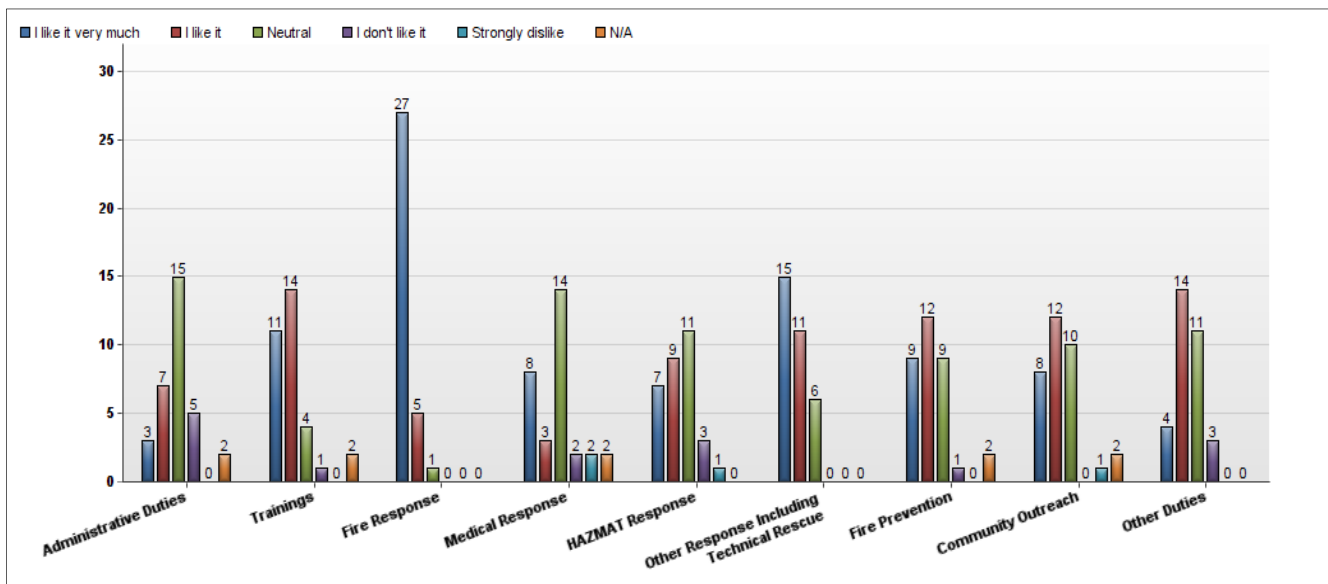
The majority of the fire department members enjoy giving back and serving the community and town.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	29

30. How much do you enjoy the following activities? (Please drag and drop the items into the appropriate categories and rank items based on how enjoyable they are)

Of the fire department members who responded, 15 are neutral on administrative duties, 14 like trainings, 27 like fire responses very much, 14 are neutral on medical responses, 11 are neutral on HAZMAT responses, 15 like other responses including technical rescue very much, 12 like fire prevention, 12 like community outreach, and 14 like other duties.

Figure 30, a-c



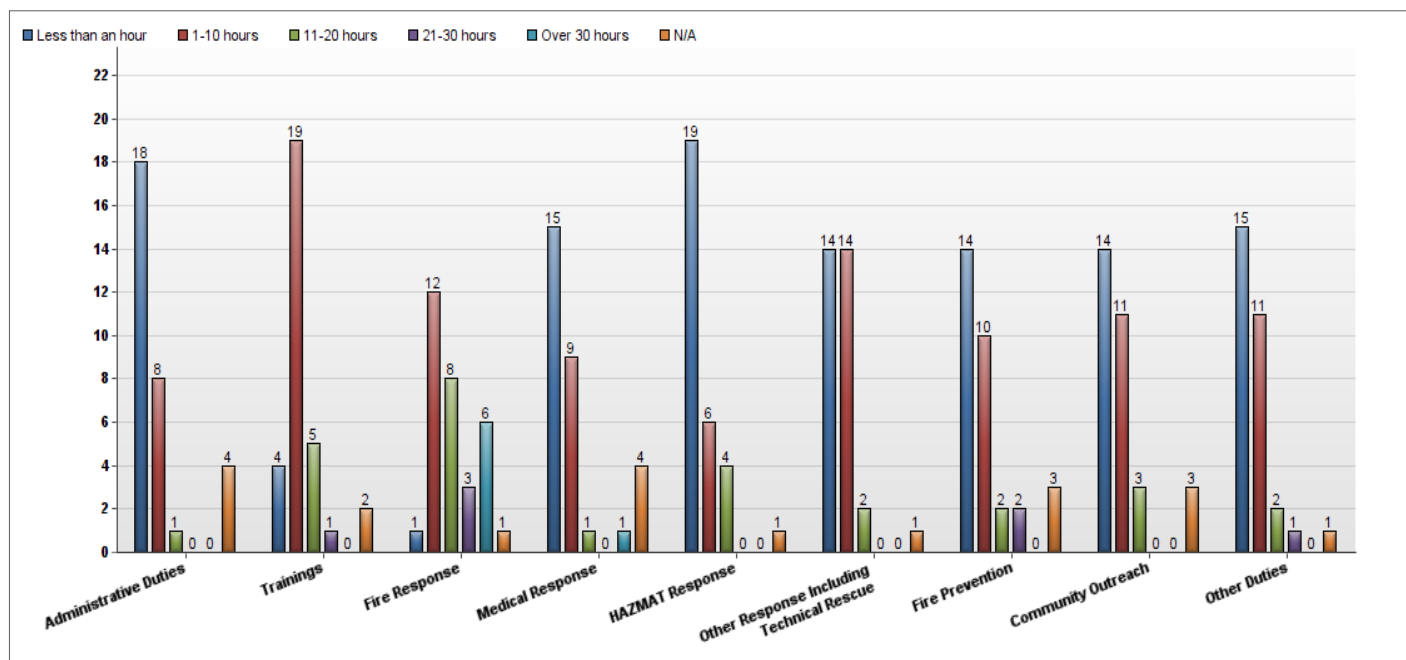
#	Answer	I like it very much	I like it	Neutral	I don't like it	Strongly dislike	N/A
1	Administrative Duties	3	7	15	5	0	2
2	Trainings	11	14	4	1	0	2
3	Fire Response	27	5	1	0	0	0
4	Medical Response	8	3	14	2	2	2
5	HAZMAT Response	7	9	11	3	1	0
6	Other Response Including Technical Rescue	15	11	6	0	0	0
7	Fire Prevention	9	12	9	1	0	2
8	Community Outreach	8	12	10	0	1	2
9	Other Duties	4	14	11	3	0	0

Answer	I like it very much - Mean Rank	I like it - Mean Rank	Neutral - Mean Rank	I don't like it - Mean Rank	Strongly dislike - Mean Rank	N/A - Mean Rank
Administrative Duties	1.00	2.00	1.80	1.20	0.00	2.00
Trainings	2.09	2.07	1.75	2.00	0.00	1.00
Fire Response	1.93	2.40	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Medical Response	3.38	1.67	1.93	1.00	1.00	2.50
HAZMAT Response	4.00	2.00	2.18	1.00	1.00	0.00
Other Response Including Technical Rescue	2.80	2.64	1.67	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fire Prevention	3.33	2.50	2.44	2.00	0.00	3.00
Community Outreach	3.38	1.92	3.70	0.00	1.00	2.00
Other Duties	4.25	2.21	2.73	1.00	0.00	0.00

31. Approximately how much time do you spend performing the following activities? (Please drag and drop the items into the appropriate categories and rank items based on the amount of time spent on each)

Of the fire department members who responded, 18 spend less than an hour on administrative duties, 19 spend 1-10 hours on trainings, 12 spend 1-10 hours on fire response, 15 spend less than an hour on medical response, 19 spend less than an hour on HAZMAT response, 14 spend less than an hour and 14 spend 1-10 hours on other response including technical rescue, 14 spend less than an hour on fire prevention, 14 spend less than an hour on community outreach, and 15 spend less than an hour on other duties.

Figure 31, a-c



#	Answer	Less than an hour	1-10 hours	11-20 hours	21-30 hours	Over 30 hours	N/A
1	Administrative Duties	18	8	1	0	0	4
2	Trainings	4	19	5	1	0	2
3	Fire Response	1	12	8	3	6	1
4	Medical Response	15	9	1	0	1	4
5	HAZMAT Response	19	6	4	0	0	1
6	Other Response Including Technical Rescue	14	14	2	0	0	1
7	Fire Prevention	14	10	2	2	0	3
8	Community Outreach	14	11	3	0	0	3
9	Other Duties	15	11	2	1	0	1

Answer	Less than an hour - Mean Rank	1-10 hours - Mean Rank	11-20 hours - Mean Rank	21-30 hours - Mean Rank	Over 30 hours - Mean Rank	N/A - Mean Rank
Administrative Duties	2.44	1.63	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.50
Trainings	2.75	2.53	1.60	1.00	0.00	5.00
Fire Response	3.00	2.08	1.13	1.00	1.17	2.00
Medical Response	2.33	2.33	5.00	0.00	1.00	3.25
HAZMAT Response	2.68	3.00	1.75	0.00	0.00	5.00
Other Response Including Technical Rescue	3.14	2.86	1.00	0.00	0.00	9.00
Fire Prevention	3.64	3.40	3.00	1.50	0.00	1.33
Community Outreach	4.29	3.45	1.33	0.00	0.00	3.00
Other Duties	2.87	3.00	1.50	1.00	0.00	8.00

32. What are the most common reasons people leave the fire department? (Open-ended)

Majority of the fire department members stated the most common reasons people leave the department are: relocation, retirement, and family reasons.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	24

33. If you could change one thing that would have the greatest impact on improving employee retention, what would that be? (Open-ended)

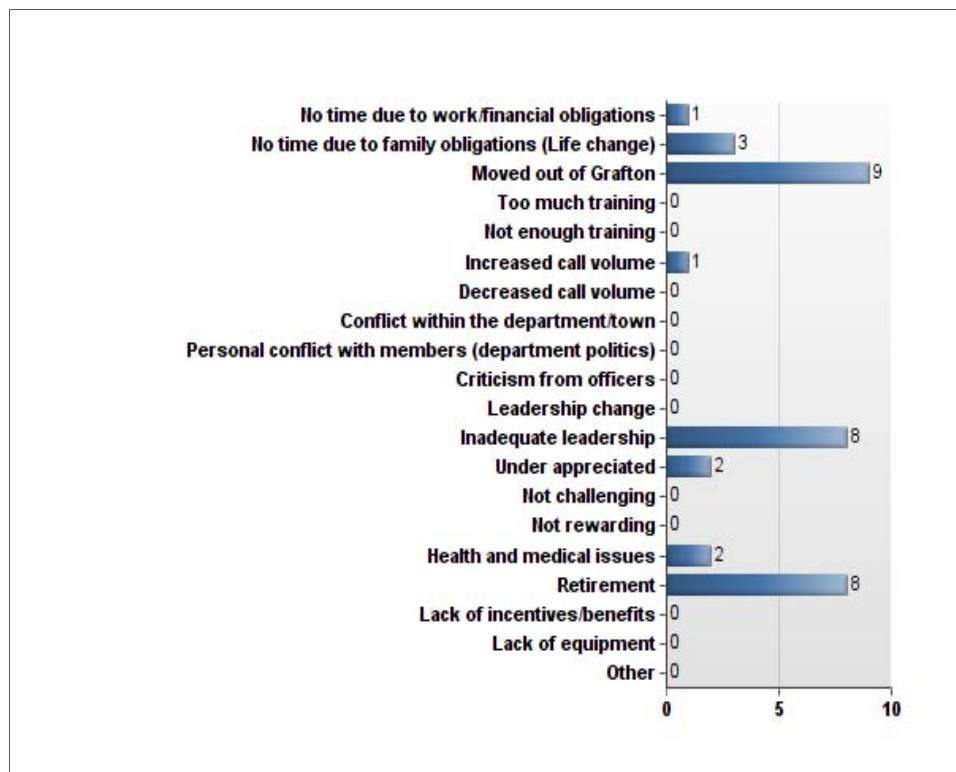
Majority of the fire department members stated that training classes would have the greatest impact on improving employee retention.







Statistic	Value
Total Responses	22


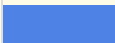
34. Why would you leave the Fire Department?

Of the 34 fire department members who responded, 26% would leave because they moved out of town and 24% would leave the department because of inadequate leadership or because of retirement. 9% would leave because of family obligations, 6% for health or medical reasons, 6% if they feel underappreciated, 3% due to no time because of family obligations, and 3% due to an increase in call volume.

Figure 34, a-c



#	Answer		Response	%
1	No time due to work/financial obligations		1	3%
2	No time due to family obligations (Life change)		3	9%
3	Moved out of Grafton		9	26%
4	Too much training		0	0%
5	Not enough training		0	0%
6	Increased call volume		1	3%
7	Decreased call volume		0	0%
8	Conflict within the department/town		0	0%
9	Personal conflict with members (department politics)		0	0%
10	Criticism from officers		0	0%
11	Leadership change		0	0%
12	Inadequate leadership		8	24%
13	Under appreciated		2	6%
14	Not challenging		0	0%
15	Not rewarding		0	0%

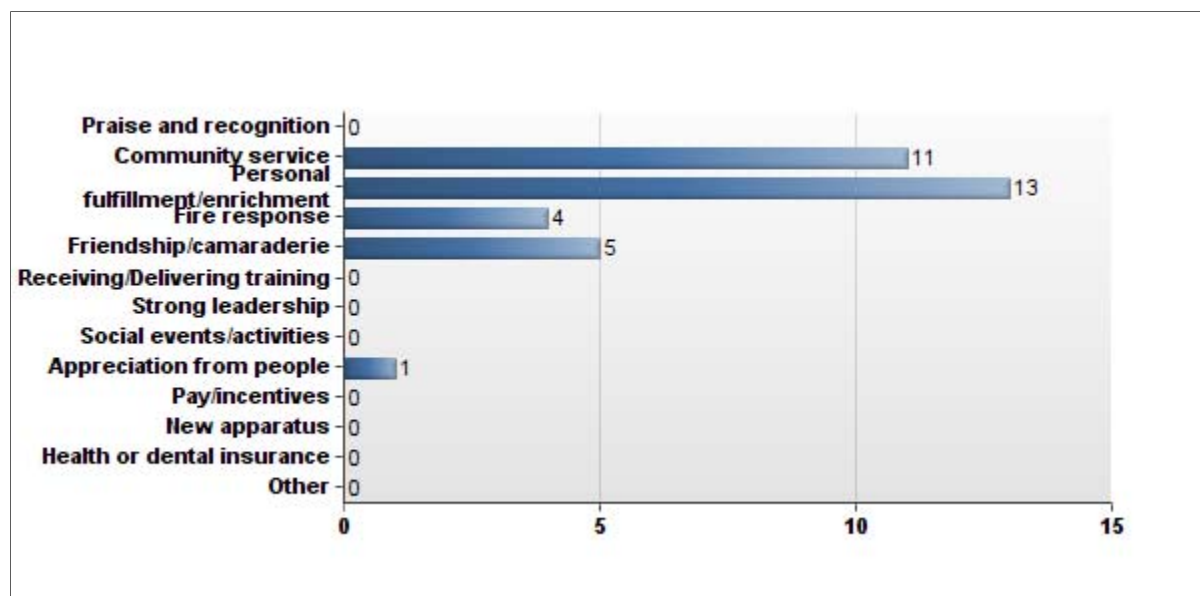
16	Health and medical issues		2	6%
17	Retirement		8	24%
18	Lack of incentives/benefits		0	0%
19	Lack of equipment		0	0%
20	Other		0	0%
	Total		34	100%






Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	17
Mean	9.71
Variance	37.61
Standard Deviation	6.13
Total Responses	34

35. What keeps you motivated to continue being on-call/service for the Grafton Fire Department?

Of the 34 fire department members who responded, 38% said that personal fulfillment/enrichment keeps them motivated to continue being on-call/service to the fire department, while 32% said community service does. 15% said friendship/camaraderie, 12% said fire response, and 3% said appreciation from people is what keeps them motivated to continuing being on-call/service to the fire department.

Figure 35, a-c



#	Answer		Response	%
1	Praise and recognition		0	0%
2	Community service		11	32%
3	Personal fulfillment/enrichment		13	38%
4	Fire response		4	12%
5	Friendship/camaraderie		5	15%
6	Receiving/Delivering training		0	0%
7	Strong leadership		0	0%
8	Social events/activities		0	0%
9	Appreciation from people		1	3%
10	Pay/incentives		0	0%
11	New apparatus		0	0%
12	Health or dental insurance		0	0%
13	Other		0	0%
	Total		34	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	9
Mean	3.26
Variance	2.08
Standard Deviation	1.44
Total Responses	34

36. In your opinion, what changes or improvements should be made to encourage fire fighters to stay with the department longer? (Open-ended)

Majority of the fire department members stated that better communication and a list of goals would encourage fire fighters to stay with the department longer.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	24

37. Name one thing you wish your supervisor would do or offer you to improve your engagement? (Open-ended)

Majority of the fire department members wish their supervisor would offer more trainings to improve engagement within the department.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	20

38. If you could name one thing that the town could offer you as an employee, what would that be? (Open-ended)

Majority of the fire department members stated that the town could offer them a decent retirement plan and could offer more training opportunities.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	21

39. Can you name two things that the town offers you that keeps you with the organization? (Open-ended)

Majority of the fire department members said the town offers them proper equipment and wages which keep them within the organization.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	20

COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

In order to put the Grafton Fire Department's performance in perspective, it is helpful to compare them to other town fire departments that share similar characteristics. Thus, town administration can identify benchmarks that can be used to assess their own town's performance. Whereas no two towns are exactly alike in terms of size, population, government, and services, there are still shared qualities that are useful for comparison.

This comparison is not a direct indicator of fire department performance; however it does help in assessing the department in relation to its peers. The researchers hope that this comparison will reconfirm the strengths and areas for improvement for the Town of Grafton. The Massachusetts towns (see Table 1) chosen for comparison, Millbury and Spencer, both have similar characteristics to Grafton. Data was obtained through the most recent census, websites, department surveys, and other studies. The complete survey results are presented in Appendix (C) along with the complete budget comparison.

For the purpose of this research, it is important to note where the data has been drawn from in order to maintain credibility of the study:

- * Interviews with town administrators and fire department leaders
- * Interviews with members of the fire department
- * Anonymous online fire department survey

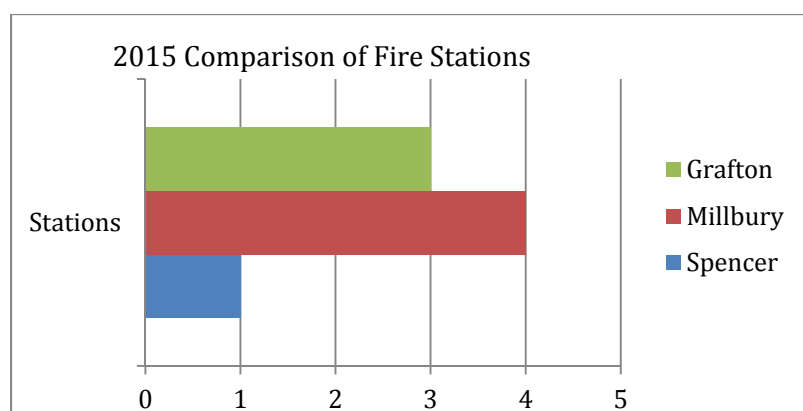
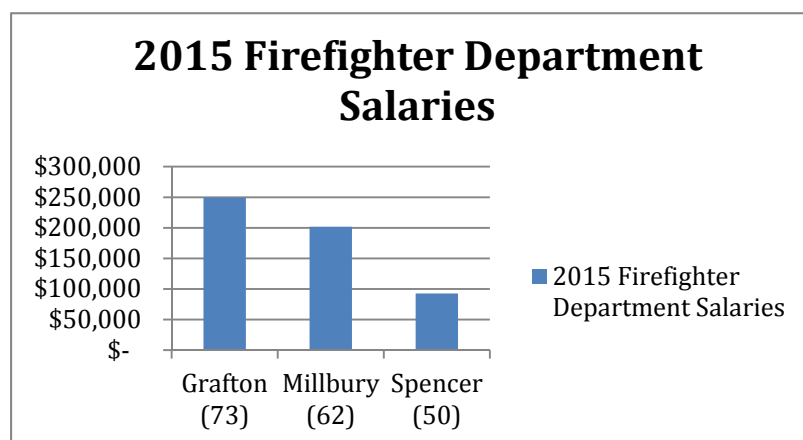
The data obtained from all of the above mentioned processes were instrumental in providing valuable input into this study and the recommendations detailed in this report. The candid insight of all those interviewed, anonymous or not, helped to solidify the conclusions and ultimately shape the recommendations. Regardless of the types of tools used to collect the data, the information was useful and valuable. The data collected from the survey confirmed and validated the information the researchers learned during interviews. Since the data was comprised of a comprehensive set of survey questions, comments and material were reviewed, analyzed and factored into the analysis and recommendations.

Demographics*: Population: Grafton, 17,765; Spencer, 11,688; and Millbury, 13,261. The average household income: Grafton, \$109,532; Spencer, \$68,404; and Millbury, \$80,469. Fire Department: Grafton, one part-time Chief, one Deputy Chief, three Captains, two Assistant Chiefs, six lieutenants, 60 on-call firefighters, and provides both fire and rescue services; Spencer, one full-time Chief, one on-call Deputy Chief, five Captains, five Lieutenants, 40 on-call firefighters, and provides both fire and rescue services; and Millbury, one part-time Chief, four Assistant Chiefs, four Captains, seven Lieutenants, 46 Firefighters, and provides both fire and rescue services. Total departmental budgets for FY2015 are highlighted in Appendix E. *Data taken from town websites.

City	Firefighters	2010 Pop	Stations	2015 Budget	Cost/citizen
Towns:					
Grafton	60	17,765	3	\$ 638,033	\$35.92
Millbury	46	13,261	4	\$ 474,539	\$35.78
Spencer	40	11,688	1	\$ 643,343	\$55.04

Table 1. *Comparison of Towns*

Comparable Town Fire Stations: the Grafton Fire Department is comprised of three fire stations; Millbury has a total of four stations, with one as its headquarters; and Spencer has one fire station (see Figure 1). Fire department salaries range from Grafton with a total staff of 73 at \$389,595; Millbury with a total staff of 62 at \$323,089; and Spencer with a total staff of 50 at \$212,478 (see Figure 2).

Figure 1. *Comparison of Fire Stations*Figure 2. *Firefighter Department Salaries*

Recruitment: Recruiting citizens to be on-call firefighter volunteers can be a difficult process for some departments. Identifying demographic groups where potential volunteers may reside is the first step. In communities like Grafton, the most prominent groups are college students, stay-at-home moms, and empty nesters (NVFC, 2014). With staff retirement issues looming in the near future for Grafton (21% of participants surveyed will retire in the next 5 years), recruiting from these groups has been considered a challenge, but research suggests that with planning and strategizing, this could be a focus of future recruitment efforts (NVFC, 2014).

Cheryl Barker, Grafton Fire Department Administrative Assistant, states that Grafton does not normally post openings, and that recruits come primarily through word of mouth and through friends and family. This is confirmed in the survey data as out the 44 Fire department members that responded to the Grafton Fire Department survey's question on recruitment, 61% heard about the fire department from family members or friends, while 34% heard about the Department from word of mouth. The other 5% heard about the Department from another source and this could possibly be pursued in future research (see Figure 3). Ms. Barker noted in an email, "Recently (last few years), we've gotten a handful of interested parties, new to town, who are interested in doing good for the community." According to Mary Ann McLaughlin, a Spencer firefighter with over five years of experience, the main reason she became a firefighter was to give back to the community. The town firefighters are "protective" by nature, "caregivers," and find firefighting "rewarding." Pat Gorham, a Spencer firefighter, knew his "whole life that he wanted to help others in any way he could." Gorham enjoys public service, helping people,

and feels it is second nature in Spencer.

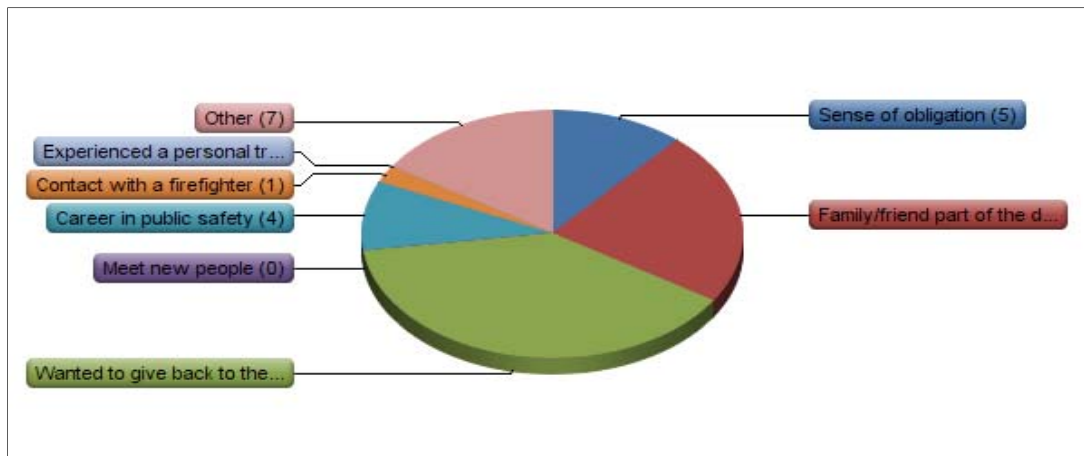


Figure 3. *Primary Reason for Joining Grafton's Fire Department*

Spencer Fire Chief Robert Parsons knows what it's like first-hand to try and recruit new firefighters. While Grafton Fire Department seems to recruit more through word-of-mouth, Spencer has no formal recruitment strategy—volunteers “walk in” regardless of tactics like newspaper ads, cable access channel ads, and open houses. This is unlike Grafton where there never seems to have a shortage of volunteers—of the three towns, Grafton has the highest level of volunteers (60; see Figure 4).

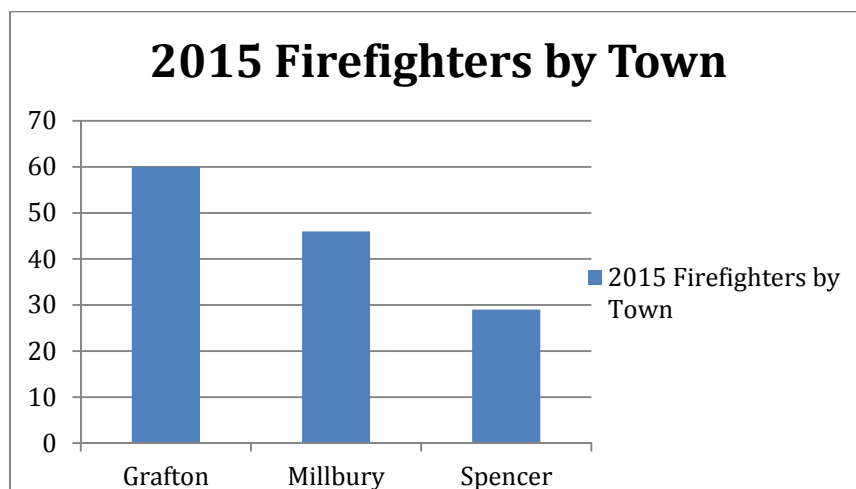


Figure 4. *Firefighters by Town*

According to Assistant Chief, Richard Hamilton, and Head Clerk, Regina Markey, the Millbury Fire Department recruits mostly through friends and family. One family has eight active members and another family has four. There are five—father and son members. The recruitment comes from the tradition of the family and once they become part of the department, there is a comradery and a family bond. Grafton too has the relationship of family, as Chief Mickey Gauthier is the third generation chief.

Retention: While volunteers join a fire department for various reasons, retention issues come down to two distinct reasons: life changes and problems arising with these changes; and issues related to the fire department and services itself. There are four main characteristics that address the issues with fire department retention (NVFC, 2014):

- The department services must meet the firefighters' needs
- The department must provide reward and recognition
- The department must provide adequate leadership
- The department must challenge its firefighters

Quality recruitment and/or retention programs should take these aforementioned issues into account in their departmental programs. The Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) (www.fema.gov; www.usfa.fema.gov) both have published free reports on recruitment and retention. One publication, *Recruitment and Retention in the Volunteer Fire Service: Problems and Solutions Final Report December 1998* outlines programs and resources that have been tried and have proven successful throughout the United States.

Department services must meet the firefighters' needs: According to the Grafton Fire Department Survey, 63% participants responded that they know what is expected of them at work; 65% said they often have the materials and equipment they need in order to complete their work correctly; and 60% sometimes have the opportunity to do what they do best every day. Mary Ann McLaughlin, a Spencer firefighter, feels that Spencer's department also meets the needs of the firefighters, especially with education and training. Millbury's Assistant Chief Hamilton feels they meet the needs of the department; maintaining regular meetings and department needs to stay active and connected as a unit.

The department must provide reward and recognition: According to the Grafton Fire Department Survey, 40% of participants sometimes received recognition or praise for doing good work. Brian Mahan, a Spencer Fire Department Lieutenant with over ten years of experience, worked in Grafton before joining the Spencer Fire Department and felt he had a positive experience. The main reason for leaving was that the cost of living in Spencer was cheaper. In Grafton, 46% of the participants felt that their supervisor or someone at work cares for them as a person. Millbury's Assistant Chief Hamilton makes sure there is adequate representation at board meetings and working directly with officers. This aligns with Grafton where 60% of participants felt that there is often or sometimes someone at work who encourages them.

Incentive and recognition programs are very important for on-call fire and rescue members. Given the time demands, training demands, and personal risks, it is easy for on-call members to burn out and quit after only a few years of service. Incentives and recognition programs are essential components to maintaining a strong company of experienced members and to "prevent a revolving door situation" (NVFC, 2014, p. 1).

Millbury offers their *Length of Service Awards Program* in order for their firefighters to gain recognition. The Spencer Fire Department Gala is a great way to recognize department members, and although firefighter salaries are frugal, they are given a quarterly stipend for their membership. Similarly, Grafton has regular dinners, get-togethers, and family functions. Many towns are starting to strengthen their incentive program for on-call firefighters. The cost of incentives is small and economically justifiable when recruitment and retention of firefighters is taken into account. Money well spent considering volunteer firefighters/rescue services are the first line defenders for most emergencies and disasters.

The department must provide adequate leadership: 47% agree or strongly agree that they are able to speak openly with leaders about issues the department is facing in Grafton. Spencer's Pat Gorham enjoys the support and camaraderie of his department and likens it as a big family. Millbury feels the same way in that voices are recognized at quarterly meetings especially because the Chief is on the Board. Brian Mahan, also from Spencer feels that the Chief has done so much for the town and has provided well for the department.

The department must challenge its firefighters: According to the Grafton Fire Department Survey, 60% agree or strongly agree that trainings are relevant and valuable to the work they do in the department. Spencer and Millbury also stay current with trainings and education.

Data Provided: As part of the present study, the Town of Grafton was seeking to establish a starting point for information regarding future retirement projections. For this project the researchers created a survey similar to the employee satisfaction survey that

the Town of Spencer had recently given to its fire department staff. Spencer is also concerned about their future loss of staff due to retirement. The Town of Spencer had hired a consulting firm for survey design. Chief Parsons had helped to construct the survey and noted the response rate was high and therefor might be relevant to the present study. Brian Mahan, a Spencer lieutenant, had taken the survey and noted that it involved employee satisfaction, retention, and recruitment.

Start Age: According to the Grafton Fire Department Survey, the largest number (44%) of firefighters come into the department under the age of 21 (see Figure 5) with the smallest age group being between the ages of 46-50 (2; 5%). Spencer Fire Department (see Figure 6) also has their largest number of firefighters coming into the department (35.9%) under the age of 21 with the smallest age group being over 40 (1; 2.%). Millbury data is unavailable.

Roster: All three towns are supported by one chief and approximately 40-60 on-call firefighters (see Tables 2a,b,c for Roster Summaries). The survey will note that training is a strong asset of the fire department and one of the reasons a full roster of volunteers should be maintained. This will mean looking for future members in citizen groups either under-represented or not represented in the current department roster. The Department should continue to keep training and safety as priority. The average hours of training per firefighter should meet the current basic mandates and industry standards.

A. Grafton	# STAFF
Chief	1
Assist. Chief	2
Dep. Chief	1
Captain	3
Lieutenant	6
Firefighter	60
TOTAL	73

B. Millbury	# STAFF
Chief	1
Asst. Chief	4
Captain	4
Lieutenant	7
Firefighter	46
TOTAL	62

C. Spencer	# STAFF
Chief	1
Dep. Chief	1
Captain	4
Lieutenant	4
Firefighter	40
TOTAL	50









#	Answer		Response	%
1	Under 21		19	44%
2	21-25		3	7%
3	26-30		4	9%
4	31-35		5	12%
5	36-40		4	9%
6	41-45		3	7%
7	46-50		2	5%
8	51-55		0	0%
9	56-60		3	7%
10	61-65		0	0%
	Total		43	100%

Figure 5. Grafton Fire Department Start Age

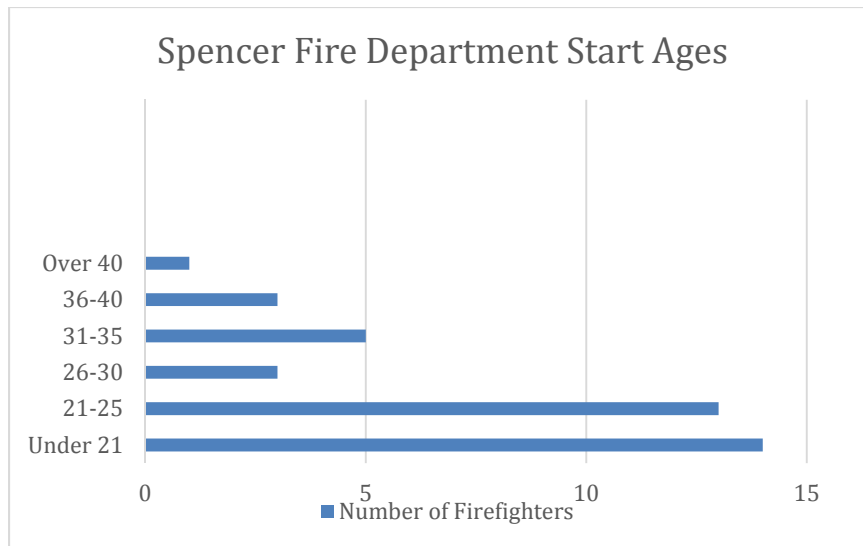


Figure 6. *Spencer Fire Department Start Ages*

Age when left the department: According to the Spencer Fire Department Survey, they lose their highest number of firefighters between the ages of 31-35. Since the Grafton Fire Department Survey was based on active firefighters, data is not available, however, Brian Mahan, a Spencer firefighter and ex-Grafton Fire Department firefighter says that the biggest reason for most young ambitious firefighters leaving is that they are given major life choices—“be a firefighter and starve” or find a better job. Patrick Gorham, loves his “family” in Spencer, but also says that many firefighters long to be on a full-time department and many leave for other opportunities, and the opportunity to work full-time would be the only reason he would want to leave.

Reason for leaving the department: According to the Spencer Fire Department Survey, relocating/moving is the largest reason for leaving the department (33.9%) with the second largest reason being retirement (22%). Whereas the Grafton Fire Department Survey was based on active firefighters, this data is unavailable, however, when asked what

the most common reasons people leave the fire department are, the answers were: relocation, retirement, and family reasons. Millbury's firefighters seem to stay until retirement if relocation and family issues weren't present.

Budget Summary*: In a comparison of budgets, Fire Chief salaries are: Spencer, \$81,016 for a full-time Chief; Millbury, \$29,907 for a part-time Chief; and Grafton, \$2,000 for a part-time Chief stipend. Spencer has the lowest firefighter (44) salary at \$92,722 compared to Millbury (62) at \$201,686 and Grafton (72) at \$249,420, however, Spencer also has the lowest amount of firefighters staffed.

Spencer has incorporated a part-time clerk position for \$21,806; Millbury a full-time clerk at \$38,148; and Grafton a full-time clerk at \$57,159. Whereas Spencer's budget supports some part-time Deputy Chief salary for \$8,690 and a SEMA Director for \$2,237, Millbury supports four Assistant Chief salaries for \$13,012. In addition to salaries, Grafton includes an additional \$10,000 for stipends, and Millbury an additional \$7,000 for stipends for Captains, Lieutenants, and miscellaneous personnel.

According to Grafton's 2015 budget, the Town has 72 firefighters to deliver emergency services and respond to requests for assistance. This staffing level is slightly above the compared cities, and the cost to support this many firefighters is higher. That being said, the Chief support is considerably low in comparison to the other towns and the level of staff being supported (see Figure 7).

City	Firefighters	2015 Budget	Cost/FF	Chief Salary
Grafton	72	\$249,429	\$3,464	\$2,000
Millbury	62	\$201,686	\$3,253	\$29,907
Spencer	44	\$92,722	\$2,107	\$81,016

Figure 7. Salary per Firefighter

Department expenses for comparison include: utilities, equipment rentals, trainings, supplies, dues, and gear. Spencer Fire Department comes in at \$159,312, compared to Millbury for \$145,600, and Grafton \$155,888. Total budgets include capital and leases (see Figure 8): Spencer, \$643,343; Millbury \$474,539; and Grafton \$638,033.

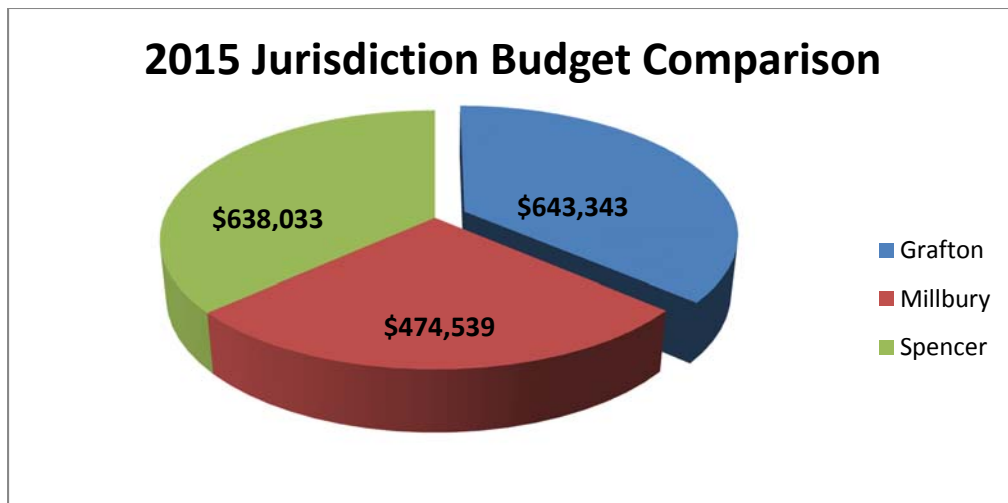


Figure 8. 2015 Jurisdiction Budget Comparison

*Firefighter data taken from town budgets and is included in Appendix E.

CONCLUSION

The data results reaffirm that the Town of Grafton Fire Department is following well-known best practices. Not only does the department provide quality service to citizens, but it functions at an adequate level. Interactions with town personnel also support this factor. The Town has many strengths which are a result of dedication and commitment of the fire department members and include: a strong level of commitment, camaraderie in the department, training, equipment, and leadership. These are also strengths common to the compared towns which again confirms that the fire department is proceeding in an efficient way. Although the Town is functioning at a sufficient

level, in order to maximize Grafton's full potential as a fire department, the researchers are suggesting the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RESTATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Town of Grafton is seeking assistance in preparing for a number of retirements within its on-call fire department in upcoming years and wants to ensure they will be able to maintain an adequate membership level to ensure quality fire services are provided by the Town for its residents. The research team has been charged with researching the challenges of recruitment and retention for on-call fire departments in an effort to develop recommended strategies to assist in their succession planning.

SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

Interviews.

The research team conducted several interviews designed to provide background and to gain an understanding of the Town's concerns. The team initiated the project by interviewing the Town of Grafton's Assistant Town Administrator, Doug Willardson. This interview was critical for not only background purposes, but also to obtain approval for the project outline. For additional background, the team also interviewed the Grafton Town Administrator, Timothy McNerney.

In order to gain the perspective within the fire department, the team interviewed Cheryl Barker, Fire Department Administrative Assistant and Michael Gauthier, Fire

Chief/Forest Fire Warden. This interview was instrumental in getting a historical perspective but was also important for the purposes of determining available data that could be used towards the team's research.

Part of the team's research also included community comparison analysis in which two towns of similar size and with similar organizational structures, could be evaluated for their recruitment and retention strategies and to possibly gain insight into the successes and challenges they have experienced. The team selected the towns of Spencer and Millbury, MA.

In the Town of Spencer, the team interviewed Fire Chief Robert Parsons and discussed the efforts that he has undertaken in order to foster new recruits into the department. The team also interviewed Spencer firefighters Mary McLaughlin, Brian Mahan, and Patrick Gorham. All three had various years of experience and had joined the department under different circumstances. For a retention perspective, it was interesting to discuss with them the conditions that were available to ensure they remained active with the department.

In the Town of Millbury, the team interviewed Assistant Chief, Richard Hamilton, and Head Clerk, Regina Markey. They advised the team that one of the main reasons the Millbury Fire Department is successful at recruiting is that their membership is generational and that new members apply because they are friends or family of an existing member. There is a strong sense of tradition which easily converts into camaraderie. They also advised the team that retention efforts include leadership support through regular representation at board meetings and a strong recognition program. It is because of these

recruitment and retention variables that Millbury's firefighters seem to stay until retirement as long as relocation or other family concerns don't arise.

Literature Review.

The team set out to find ten (10) quality articles regarding the challenges of recruitment and retention in on-call fire departments across the United States. Some of the articles could offer insight into best practices that could be later utilized as recommendation strategies.

One of the articles, "6 Tips to Retain and Recruit Volunteer Firefighters" (911 Signal USA, 2015), gave a very basic list of recruitment and retention strategies that included keeping the application process as short as possible and also ensuring that applicants fully understand the rigors of training in order to become a firefighter.

Two articles, "Tips for Recruiting a New Generation" (Raffel, 2013) and "Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Technology versus Tradition" (Ameen, & Caputo, 2013), gave insight as to the challenges of recruiting and retaining members under the current environment which could be improved through the use of technological advances such as utilizing social media outlets.

Several articles offered inspiration as to one of the traditional reasons for joining on-call departments which is to give back to the community. For communities near the Arctic, they rely on this sense of community for ensuring adequate fire services coverage (Varga, 2015). Another article covered the rewarding experiences of an Army Recruiter

(Conning, 2014) that set out to offer his time to the City of Seattle, WA becoming a volunteer firefighter, which has become a fixture in his life.

As far as articles relating specifically to retention, an overall theme was that these efforts should be consistent and ongoing. An example was in “Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Technology versus Tradition” (Ameen, & Caputo, 2013), the author explained that the retention process must be constantly managed by establishing policies, procedures and standards, updating bylaws and conducting exit interviews.

Survey.

The research team designed an anonymous survey, targeted at the 73 members of the Grafton Fire Department. The survey was carefully designed to collect honest and accurate information while protecting the identities of the responders. The anonymous survey was reviewed by the Town of Grafton and also by Clark University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). The survey was administered via Qualtrics, which is an anonymous on-line survey tool approved by the Office of Sponsored Programs and the IRB committee at Clark University.

The survey sought demographic information from the responder as well as responses to questions regarding interest in joining the department and also the interest in remaining active with the department. The team was able to collect 49 out of 73 potential participants, represented a response rate of 66%, which is a very positive representation of the target population (firefighters).

Comparable Communities.

The team determined that as part of the study, it would be beneficial to see whether nearby communities were experiencing recruitment and retention challenges and if anything could be borrowed in terms of best practices for maintaining adequate service levels within on-call fire departments in the Central Worcester County area. As mentioned above, the team interviewed Fire Chiefs and several existing firefighters from the towns of Spencer and Millbury as had been done previously in the Town of Grafton.

In addition to conducting interviews with fire department personnel from two other similar towns, the team researched demographic statistics of all three communities, compared the sizes and structure of each department, as well as analyzed the municipal budgets dedicated to fire services. Each town was found to staff administration in different manners; from a full time chief in Spencer, to a part-time chief in Millbury, to a stipend position in Grafton. The towns differed in the number of stations (Millbury 4, Grafton 3, Spencer 2) and the sizes of their departments (Grafton 72, Millbury 62, Spencer 40).

As far as municipal expenditures for fire services, when comparing the common expenses within the department budgets, all three spend a similar amount on maintenance (building, equipment, apparatus repair), turnout gear, office supplies and communications. They do however differ in the amount they spend on training expenses and utilities. In addition, Spencer includes EMS service and the lease of a replacement engine in their budget which skews the overall amount spent on the category of expenses.

A significant difference between the communities, which is related to the way staffing is structured, is the difference in the amount of money spent on personnel (salaries). As far as administrative salaries, the Town of Spencer spends \$81,016 on a full-

time fire chief while Millbury spends \$29,907 on a part-time chief and Grafton spends only \$2,000 towards a stipend for their fire chief. Each Chief has an administrative assistant as well. However, the Town of Spencer spends only \$21,806 on a part-time clerk while Millbury spends \$249,429 per firefighter or \$38,148 on a full-time clerk and Grafton spends \$57,159 on their full-time clerk.

In addition, the amount spent on firefighters is quite varied. Spencer only spends \$92,722 or \$2,318 per firefighter, while Millbury spends \$201,686 or \$3,253 per firefighter, and Grafton spends \$3,464. The major difference between the communities in monies spent on its on-call membership is that Grafton spends an additional \$67,264 on training hours while Spencer and Millbury include their training in the money available for salaries. When training wages are added to Grafton's salaries, the amount spent per firefighter climbs to \$4398; almost double that of Spencer and one-third more than Millbury.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Grafton's administration is concerned with upcoming retirements possibly affecting membership levels. They have not had concerns in the past as membership levels have always been adequate. Turnover has occurred in the past like most departments, when members relocate due to a change in employment or changes with family, but membership levels have not been affected as new recruits have always applied. Grafton has been fortunate to have a culture of tradition within their department in that family and friends tend to join the department following in the footsteps of former or existing members.

From our research, we have found that this is not always the case, and in fact is becoming less of the norm than with previous generations. FEMA, through the U.S. Fire

Administration, published the Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services, Challenges and Solutions in May of 2007 (NVFC, 2014). In this comprehensive report, FEMA explains that the numbers of volunteers has been dropping over the last 25 years. The reports states that the “causes of the problems are similar in all 50 States. No single region of the country is dealing with problems that are significantly different than those found in other regions.” The report lists multiple sources for the problem with declining memberships, some of which include the following:

- Time Demands (two-income families working multiple jobs)
- Training Requirements (higher standards, greater time investment)
- Increasing Call Volume (fire departments performing wider response role)
- Changes in Social Conditions (less interest in community, focus on self)
- Leadership Issues (lack of coordination, failure to manage change)
- Federal Legislation and Regulations
- Combination Department Issues (conflict between career and volunteer)
- Higher Cost of Housing, Aging Communities, Lack of Economic Growth

Grafton’s administration is right to be concerned, not only from the trend of declining membership across the country, but also from the demographic make-up of its current department. The survey conducted by the research team indicated that of the 43 respondents, 26% have over 30 years of service and 44% have 21 years of service or more indicating that the department, although filled with valuable experience, may be aging and nearing retirement age.

This in fact was confirmed as when responding to the survey, 21% of the respondents indicated they would be retiring within the next 5 years and 40% responded they would be retiring within the next 10 years.

Thus, the Town of Grafton, through its administration and the leaders within the fire department, should be motivated to ensure that recruitment efforts are maximized to solicit the greatest number of quality applicants to replace eventual retiring members.

In addition, retention efforts within the department should be consistent and on-going to ensure that additional member loss from non-retirement and non-relocation reasons does not occur and further add to a potential severe decline in membership, jeopardizing the Town's ability to provide adequate fire service to its residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

RECOMMENDATION #1

Adopt Record Keeping and Data Collection Procedures

From our comparable community interviews, it was revealed that some towns have implemented personnel tracking systems into their department management duties. Some towns track data as it relates to incoming and outgoing personnel and also track employment satisfaction. We have three (3) specific recommendations for the Town of Grafton as it relates to tracking membership for the purposes of obtaining information that will assist the Town with future recruitment and retention efforts.

First, we recommend the implementation of an Incoming Interview at the time of hire. This task is sometimes performed by the Human Resources Coordinator but can also

be conducted by the Fire Chief or Administrative Clerk. This is separate from the interviews that take place during the hiring process. Information that should be recorded should include demographics (age, gender, education level, etc.), reasons for interest in the department and how they became interested in the department, feedback on the application and hiring process, expectations for their tenure on the department, and expected length of service. This information should be tracked and updated so that all new hires are tracked and their answers recorded for future analysis so that recruitment efforts and the application process can be curtailed to best access new members.

Second, we recommend that annual performance reviews that may or may not be currently conducted, include retention-based questions and that the responses be recorded. This task should be performed by the Fire Chief. It is typical of municipal organizations to incorporate yearly personnel evaluations which most likely coincide with annual COLA (standard of living) or Step (scale) changes. These evaluations typically evaluate performance (attendance, duties, etc.) and sometimes evaluate goals that were set during a previous evaluation. We recommend that this annual review should incorporate questions that are similar to what was included on the anonymous survey that was conducted as part of this study. The Chief should collect feedback on those variables that may keep or prevent a member from staying active. Questions may include topics such as the adequacy of training, adequacy of equipment, adequacy of internal communication, opinion of pay, rewards, recognition, etc.

This feedback should be collected and combined for all members and then analyzed for potential modification of department practices such that retention of the current membership is maximized.

Third we recommend the implementation of an Exit Interview at the time of separation. Just like an incoming interview, this task is typically performed by the Human Resources Coordinator but can also be done by the Fire Chief or Administrative Clerk. Information that should be recorded should include some quantitative data (age at departure, position rank, length of service, etc.), but more importantly feedback of the member's tenure should be collected. This information should include reasons for departure from the department (relocation, retirement, time demands, lost interest, etc.); were original expectations from joining the department met, exceeded, not met; was the training and resources adequate to perform duties, adequacy of communication, standards, etc.; what could the department do differently/areas needing improvement; etc. Again, this feedback should be collected and combined for all members and then analyzed for potential modification of department practices such that retention of the current membership is maximized. Spencer Chief Parsons recommends Firehouse software (data collection software) as this software is instrumental in reporting and data analysis for his fire department.

The potential costs in meeting this recommendation is the value of time more or so than the cost of a purchase. Some software may be needed but the allocation of time, whether it is the Chief's, the Human Resources Coordinator's, or Administrative Clerk's, is the key resource that is needed to satisfy this recommendation. The Town needs to assess

if it has the current time resources to perform these tasks or if additional hours should be allotted on an annual basis.

Type: Recruitment and Retention

Responsibility: Human Resources, Fire Chief and/or Administrative Clerk

Cost: Low

RECOMMENDATION #2A

Develop a Comprehensive Recruitment Strategy

The first step in the recruitment process should be determining - Who? What? When? and How? That is to say that the first step is to develop a Recruitment Plan that fits the department's needs. The plan, once developed, will assign those responsible for the implementation of the developed strategies. We recommend the Town of Grafton develop a plan that if implemented regularly, will maximize their ability to attract interested and qualified applicants which will protect the department from future retirements or other departures.

The Chief and Officers should create a Recruitment Committee that is charged with the task of developing and ensuring implementation of the plan. The Committee should begin meeting monthly and once the plan is developed this could be changed to quarterly as they conduct periodic reviews of the implementation of the strategies they have developed. Some departments will actually assign a Recruitment Coordinator that reports to the Committee and is the liaison for all recruitment activities. Based on the size of the department, and the fact that this process may be new for the Town, the Town may want to

start with the Committee and when assignments are placed, think about incorporating the Coordinator Position or task to an existing officer or member at a later time.

Once the Recruitment Committee has been formed, the Committee should undertake the task of developing a Needs Assessment. The Committee should work with the Chief and Officers, and even personnel, to assess the types of recruits they should be targeting by determining what skills are needed within the department because they are either lacking, could enhance the existing team of members, or could address future needs or specialties. Such skills could include previous public safety experience, specialty skills such as diving or climbing, familiarity with equipment, etc. Often times the assessment is conducted as part of an overall Strategic Management Plan of the Fire Department but it could be developed outside of that process, focusing only on the types of skills needed to augment the existing membership rather than looking at other aspects of the department such as capital needs.

The next step after the Committee has completed the Needs Assessment, is to then determine what time of individuals or groups contain the necessary skills to address the department's needs; essentially establishing a Targeted Recruitment Population. The Committee should focus on targeting these groups and in addition target recruits that may have compatible character, education, be able to fill shift gaps, or are geographically suited either at work or at home. An advanced technological tool in locating these individuals or groups is the use of GIS (geographical information systems). Some towns have GIS staff on hand, but if Grafton does not, they could utilize the services of a GIS Consultant, through a public entity such as the Central Massachusetts Planning Commission, or through the use of a private vendor. The United States Census and Local Town Clerk's office contains

information on residents such as employment and residence location. This information could be compiled and be mapped to assist in recruiting a targeted population.

After the Committee has been formed, conducted its Needs Assessment, and determined what skills and potential recruits that should be targeted, the next step is to develop outreach strategies to get the attention of potential recruits. Recommended outreach strategies are listed under the next recommendation grouping.

Again, just as with the first recommendation listed above (1.), the expected cost is low and the resource that is required is time. There will be added duties to existing members and officers that take part in the Committee and the Committee's tasks of conducting a Needs Assessment, defining the skills that are needed, establishing the targeted populations, and regular follow up on plan implementation. It is possible that salary for additional hours may be required to be added to the fire department budget if this time cannot be incorporated into existing duties.

Type: Recruitment

Responsibility: Chief, Officers, and Personnel

Cost: Low

RECOMMENDATION #2B

Implement Planned Outreach Strategies

It should be noted that as part of developing the plan mentioned above, when assigning recruitment or outreach tasks, the Recruitment Committee should take

advantage of existing members experience and knowledge and assigning them to perform outreach tasks. No one knows the ins and outs of performing the duties of an on-call firefighter better than existing members in the department. They could also share how they incorporate these duties and responsibilities into their lifestyles. In addition, those recruiting are recruiting members of the community that they reside; their family, their friends, their neighbors, etc. This personal affiliation adds to the recruitment process and incorporates the spirit of giving back to the community.

It should also be noted that from the research team's survey, the existing membership is committed to the quality of their work and the mission of the department makes them feel their job is important. For Question 16., 81% of the respondents felt their colleagues were committed and only 2% felt that only rarely were colleagues demonstrating commitment. For Question 15., 85% of the respondents felt that either often or sometimes the mission or purpose of the department made them feel their job is important while only 15% felt rarely or never did they feel the mission made them feel the job is important. These are two essential motivating factors (commitment and importance of the job) that may shine through during recruitment efforts.

There are six (6) main categories of outreach that we recommend the Town of Grafton incorporates into their annual recruitment plan:

- A. Community Volunteerism: One of the main reasons citizens become on-call firefighters, is to give back to the community. The outreach strategy should capitalize on this sense of community spirit and invite different segments of the population to partake in firefighting education activities. Successful community

programs include Explorers Programs, High School Programs, and Cadets (Boy Scouts). These programs do not have strenuous time demands for those that join and they are not expensive to provide. This strategy provides education of the department and the duties of an on-call firefighter to those interested in learning about the profession and those that would like to possibly donate some time to the community. Existing members of the department would provide workshops and trainings, again connecting existing experience and knowledge with those seeking out information on the career, looking to build a résumé or college application, or obtaining credit for school or college. This form of outreach is direct and intimate and provides for the opportunity of open discussions with interested recruits where as other forms of outreach (mailings) lack the availability for immediate feedback.

- B. Personal (Hands-on) Outreach: This type of outreach is again more direct and intimate and provides for back and forth discussion on the aspects of becoming an on-call firefighter. These activities should be performed by existing members who will have the ability to make a personal connection with potential recruits. This strategy is comprehensive in and of itself and tackles all avenues of direct contact outside of the volunteerism programs mentioned above. This hands-on or direct approach of outreach includes: accessing personal contacts (family and friends), making door to door visits, reaching out to known dedicated town volunteers, making announcements or setting up booths at civic events (churches, nonprofits, athletics, fairs, etc.), reaching out to newcomers to town

(information available at Town Clerk), making presentations at the schools (assemblies or career days), visiting universities, reaching out to EMT's or career firefighters that are residents, visiting local businesses and explaining the benefits to owners when allowing employees to be members, and reaching out to military personnel. This type of outreach requires follow-up to the initial contact which can be incorporated into the Recruitment Committee's periodic reviews.

- C. Traditional Media Outreach: This type of strategy tends to be more traditional and is the least intimate providing for no direct feedback or discussion. That being said, it should be maintained as part of the annual recruitment plan. Examples of the use of media outlets include PSA's (public service announcements) that utilize cable television and radio, making appearances on cable access either in forums, PSA's or displaying videos, and print material (brochures, direct mailing, posters, advertisements at the fire station, on apparatus, or elsewhere in town.
- D. Community Exposure: Regular exposure by the Chief, Officers and members within the community outside of direct outreach activities as mentioned in A. and B. above are also recommended. Open houses are a great way to make personal contact and are not necessarily direct forms of outreach, but still provide an opportunity for a community event designed to open fire stations to the public, provide activities for children, serve food, perform demonstrations,

and display equipment and apparatuses. Other forms of exposure that may not be considered direct outreach include attendance at board meetings; such as weekly Selectmen meetings providing weekly or other periodic reports, discussing capital needs, or summarizing alarm calls that took place. Also, annual town meetings with large civic minded attendance are great opportunities to make important announcements or make presentations regarding the fire departments needs that may or may not include the need to place new recruits.

E. Social Media: The ever changing world of technology is fast providing for recruitment opportunities through announcements, interactive discussions, photos, and other forms of exposure. Each municipality should operate a website providing detailed and useful information regarding the department. In addition, the department should utilize well-known outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn to network with its residents on the activities performed by firefighters within the department. Photos of trainings and new equipment, along with announcements about open houses or where recruitment activities will be taking place (school football game, weekend fair, etc.) are great ways to get the word out that the fire department is active in the community and seeking new recruits to partake.

F. Referral Incentives: Something that's very common in private sector recruitment is the offering of a one-time bonus to active employees when they are deemed responsible for bringing someone into the organization. Often times

it is through the network of an active employee and can be a family member, a friend, or colleague from previous employment or school. We recommend the fire department utilize its membership, in addition to their roles in the strategies listed above, to actively recruit new members and rewarded them when an applicant is successfully hired. We recommend a \$500 bonus to the active member upon hiring of the new recruit and an additional \$500 for when the new recruit becomes a permanent employee upon achieving firefighter certification. The incentive is designed to encourage recruits that already have a connection in the department which adds to the cohesiveness and brotherhood that is apparent in public safety organizations.

In terms of cost, again as with developing the recruitment strategy, the resource of time is needed from existing members, which may require additional salary funds. In addition the use of some media outlets (television and radio PSA's) and print materials may require funds, but the cost of social media and the use of the website is minimal, and the attendance at meetings and other forms of exposure may not cost anything at all. The Town should also add some monies to the budget to account for a reserve for potential referral bonuses.

Type: Recruitment

Responsibility: Chief, Officers, and Personnel

Cost: Medium

RECOMMENDATION #3A

Enhance Leadership

A fire department's ability to retain its members has a direct relationship to its ability to manage its people (NVFC, 2014). It is important that managers provide staff necessary resources, encourage development, create a team environment, and recognize staff for positive performance. Managers need to ensure staff is put in a position to succeed. When staff feels they are performing to their greatest extent, it not only ensures that services provided by the organization will be of high caliber, but personnel are less likely to leave the organization. Organizations should find ways to keep staff engaged and develop an environment that not only fosters success but fosters the desire to remain active with the organization. Most importantly, it should be regularly discussed the main reason that the members have joined the organization. At all trainings, officers meetings, social events and even through notices such as newsletters and emails, staff should be reminded of their mission and goals. They are there to protect the buildings and the residents within the community. It is truly an honorable service and adoration of this mission will help to maintain positive attitudes from the membership.

From reviewing the responses of the survey, specifically Question 11., we found that only 33% of the members that responded feel that they are regularly given the opportunity to do what they do best every day. We would like to make recommendations on how leadership could possibly elevate the 60% of those that felt this only occurs some of the time and also the 7% that say this rarely occurs, such that they feel they are prepared for success. Thus, we have identified five (5) areas where we recommend the fire department

managers and administration can enhance leadership efforts such that the ability to retain existing members is maximized.

- A. Communication: As with any relationship, people like to be heard and they like to be informed. Communication is a two-way street which requires active listening and also requires an environment where people can feel comfortable expressing concerns or issues. This requires openness, transparency and forums that foster discussion.

It was great to see that 63% of the respondents feel they know what is expected from them at work and at least 92% feel this sometimes occurs (Question 9.). In “6 Tips to Retain and Recruit Volunteer Firefighters” (911 SignalUSA, 2015), an important recommendation is to communicate the expectations of a firefighter during the recruitment process but also during active membership. Advising members of the expectations management has for them is an essential piece of communication that can lead to successful performance. We recommend management maintain this practice either through trainings, newsletters, email updates, and annual performance reviews.

Understanding expectations is a positive result of communication but also feedback on how you are meeting these expectations is important for personnel to assess their development as a firefighter. Our survey indicated that only 19% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that expectations are clearly communicated (Question 24.), and that constructive feedback on performance is provided on a regular basis either formally or informally. In addition, only 14%

of the respondents indicated that they are either always or even sometimes talked to about their progress. Thus, we recommend that in addition to communicating expectations, managers should provide feedback to personnel more frequently than just an annual performance evaluation, such that whether or not an employee is succeeding in meeting management's expectations, is not left to be unknown.

It should also be noted that our survey indicated that only 35% of the respondents felt they could at least sometimes talk openly with the Chief regarding department issues (Question 21.) and only 47% responded that they can at least sometimes talk openly with other leaders about issues facing the department (Question 22.). Again, as mentioned previously above, communication is a two-way street. Not only should management be communicating with staff, we recommend they establish an open line of communication back from employees. If staff doesn't feel they can discuss issues with management, they will become disenchanted and disinterested, which can lead to eventual departure.

- B. Participation in Decision Making: Leaders are tasked with making decisions that affect many. A good leader needs to understand how decisions may affect those working for the organization, and there is no better way to obtain this information than discussing potential actions or decisions directly with staff. In addition to enhancing one's ability to lead, the manager is also empowering staff

at lower levels, increasing their sense of worth within the organization in that they may have some influence in the actions implemented by management.

Our survey revealed that only 35% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that the Chief and Company leaders actively work towards making everyone feel like an integral part of the team (Question 27.) and only 21% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that department wide issues and major decisions are arrived at through discussion and consensus rather than one or two people making decisions for the entire department (Question 23.).

We thus recommend that the Chief not only involve Officers in the decision making process, but also firefighters as well. This can be done in team meetings, through surveys, at trainings, or other forums where there may interaction between decision makers and the staff that is affected by decisions. Some of these discussions should revolve around crucial topics such as working conditions, standards for operating procedures/policies, and safety concerns.

- C. Guidance/Emotional Support: Leaders not only make decisions, they also provide an avenue for guidance for career development for employees. This is often times via the transfer of technical knowledge, but is also achieved through guidance and emotional support. In addition to being involved in the decision making process, employees can feel motivated through encouragement and personal guidance. The survey responses indicated that 60% of the staff that responded feel that either sometimes or often their development is encouraged (Question 14.) and an overwhelming 85% feel that at least sometimes their

supervisors or someone else cares for them as a person. Not only is this key for a sense of worth it is important in the public safety industry as this group is often referred to as a brotherhood due to the need for support when one's safety is at risk. We recommend that the department leaders continue to maintain or even enhance the encouragement of staff during their development (during trainings, performance evaluations, etc.) and express appreciation for the connection between members when providing speeches and acknowledgments.

- D. Recognition/Department Image: This form of leadership is tied to communication and also emotional support as listed above, but deserves its own category. Not only does the recognition of individual or team successes build satisfaction for performance, it also enhances the department's image and can be used as a recruitment tool, in addition to being a retention tool. By providing recognition for employee efforts, staff not only feels appreciated, again a sense of worth, but also understands that successful performance will be rewarded.
- E. Respondents to the survey revealed that only 59% felt they are at least sometimes recognized or receive praise for their work. We recommend that the Administration, Chief and Officers incorporate regular opportunities (certificates at Selectmen Meetings, Town Meeting, etc.) for formal employee recognition, whether it is for length of service, completion of training/certification achievements, or heroic display, and to also incorporate less formal forms of recognition such as "appreciation essays" from school aged children that can

have coloring contests (drawings of firefighters in heroic action) or thank you dinners with the residents that attend the Senior Center. All of the recommendations for enhancing leadership that have been listed above have minimal cost associated with them and can be implemented in the short-term.

Type: Retention

Responsibility: Administration, Chief and Officers

Cost: Low

RECOMMENDATION #3B

Maintain and Improve Training Opportunities

It should be noted that 98% of the respondents offered that they have the materials and equipment needed to complete their work correctly (Question 10.), demonstrating community and leadership support. As far as proving necessary training, 70% of the respondents felt they at least sometimes had the opportunities to learn and grow (Question 19.) Training is a rigorous component of being a firefighter. Hundreds of hours are needed to become a firefighter and training continues as a regular part of the routine once becoming a firefighter. It not only helps staff maintain necessary certifications, or obtain new certifications for newly acquired skills, it also promotes successful performance. Adequate training is key when performing life safety activities, not only for ensuring the safety of those endangered, but also for those performing rescue missions. In addition, active training provides for a regular opportunity for team-building amongst membership which fosters cohesiveness and camaraderie. The sense of brotherhood is encouraged

through this team building activity as members prepare for dangerous situations together on a regular basis.

We recommend that the Administration and Chief continue to fund necessary training for the reasons stated above. From our Community Comparison analysis, it was revealed that Grafton offered an additional salary line item for Training, while Spencer in Millbury included training in their regular salary budget for firefighters. While Grafton normally budgets a higher dollar amount per firefighter (\$3,464) than the other two communities (Spencer \$2,318 and Millbury \$3,253), the additional training wages increases the amount spent per firefighter (\$4,398) to almost double that of Spencer and one-third more than Millbury. This commitment to training not only promotes positive performance, but is a great retention tool for the reasons mentioned above.

In addition to standard skills training for firefighters to maintain certifications and to promote positive performance, we also recommend that the Chief implement “leadership training” into the curriculum for existing officers and also long-tenured staff that would like to be put on a leadership track. These skills are different from true firefighting and are typical in larger organizations to ensure managers are properly trained to manage personnel and situations and are taught valuable skills (negotiating, discipline, coaching, etc.) that will enhance communication and expectations within the department. This is also an important part of succession planning. Knowing that upcoming retirements are evident, leadership training for members desiring to be on a leadership track will ensure that officer replacements will be properly prepared with added management skills.

It should be noted that the cost of training is significant. Although, maintaining the existing training budget does not add new expenditures, we still list the cost as “Medium to High” below. Of course, as new specialties or skills are required as the industry of fighting fires advances, new trainings may be required and the additional expenditure commitment from the Town may be required.

Type: Retention

Responsibility: Administration and Chief

Cost: Medium to High

RECOMMENDATION #3C

Foster Camaraderie within the Department

As mentioned above, there is a sense of brotherhood within the public safety industry and this appears to be true to the Grafton Fire Department. Our survey provided that 93% of the respondents feel they sometimes or often have a best friend at work. This variable certainly contributes to retention and can even lead to recruitment, as the department grows into a secondary family away from home.

We recommend the Chief and Officers encourage team functions (open houses, chicken barbeques), family functions (galas, holiday parties) and encourage the “fun factor”. Some departments will establish a Social Committee or Director (NVFC, 2014) that organizes events such as softball games, skating rink parties, coordinate fire apparatus musters with neighboring departments, trips to sporting events, etc.

We feel that this bonding enhances the camaraderie of the department. The survey indicated that only 21% responded that they disagree that members understand and trust one another (Question 26.). We feel that this number could be further lowered through team building in an out of the station.

The cost could be minimal for the Town from a budgeting standpoint as it is typical that these events are funded by the member themselves; either through Firefighter Association dues or participation fees, and through fundraising. If the department members have not created an association yet, they could inquire from the members at the Town of Spencer who have an active association that has an open house for residents, gala for members and their spouses, and host a chicken barbeque for retired department members.

Type: Retention

Responsibility: Chief and Officers

Cost: Medium

RECOMMENDATION #3D

Offer Incentives to Active Members

On-call firefighters do not join fire departments for the financial reward. They typically have full-time jobs that help sustain their livelihood and do not rely on the financial benefits of being an on-call firefighter. They typically join, as mentioned above,

due to tradition (family), to be with friends, to offer volunteerism, or give something to the community. That being said, financial incentives can be an important tool to maximize retention of existing members.

The guidebook entitled “Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services, Challenges and Solutions” (NVFC, 2014), offers multiple incentives under various categories that include “direct financial incentives”, “indirect monetary incentives”, and “other incentives.”

Some examples of each are as follows:

A. Direct Financial Incentives

- ❖ *Retirement/Pension Plans*
- ❖ *IRA's*
- ❖ *Pay per call or per hour*
- ❖ *Tax Exemptions or Deductions*
- ❖ *Insurance (Health, Dental, or Life)*
- ❖ *Tuition Assistance/Scholarships*
- ❖ *Housing Assistance (low interest loans)*

B. Indirect Financial Incentives

- ❖ *Local Business Discounts*
- ❖ *Gift Certificates*
- ❖ *Health Club Memberships*
- ❖ *Scholarships*
- ❖ *Trips*

- ❖ *Cable Television and other utility discounts*

C. Other Incentives

- ❖ *Member of the Year or Month recognitions*

- ❖ *Special Employee Appointments*

- ❖ *Excuse Member of the Month from chores*

- ❖ *Special Parking Spots*

- ❖ *Press Releases Recognizing Top Members*

There certainly is a cost to direct and certain indirect incentives, however, they may be necessary in order to encourage retention of existing members and may help with recruitments. The Town of Grafton should evaluate certain monetary and nonmonetary benefits that they may want to add or phase-in to ensure again, that they are best prepared to ensure retention of its membership in order to prepare for eventual departures due to retirements.

Type: *Retention*

Responsibility: *Administration and Chief*

Cost: *Medium to High*

APPENDICES

A. REFERENCES

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B. SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Grafton, MA Fire Department

You are receiving this anonymous survey from Cheryl Barker, Administrative Assistant and Michael Gauthier, Fire Chief/Forest Fire Warden. Clark University graduate students will be collecting results from this study to identify if retirement within an all on-call fire department affects recruitment and retention rates. The Town of Grafton looks forward to the results of this project and all fire department employees are encouraged to participate if possible. You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Doreen DeFazio, Steven Dupre, Pascale Elhoussan, Adam Gaudette, Lisa Gaudette (lgaudette@clarku.edu) and Jacqui Kasper (jkasper@clarku.edu), Clark University MPA graduate students. The advisor for this project is Professor Alicja Januszewicz of the Masters of Public Administration Program at Clark University (ajanuszewicz@clarku.edu). We are seeking Town of Grafton, MA Fire Department employee volunteers to be asked a series of questions framed around recruitment, engagement, and retention. The purpose of this study is to identify if retirement within an all on-call fire department will affect recruitment and retention rates. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes of your time to complete. The survey is completely anonymous and your participation is voluntary. No identifying information will be collected; your responses cannot be traced back and your responses will be combined with the other anonymous responses we receive for the study. You may decline to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer and if you wish to drop out of the study at any time, you are free to do so. You will not be offered any compensation for your time. All data received will be kept confidential. Please do not put any information on the survey that would allow us to identify you. If you are still interested

in participating in our study, the survey link is included below. Please click on the survey link or copy and paste the link into your web browser. By clicking the link below you indicate that you have read and understand the information provided above; that you willingly agree to participate; and that you understand that you may choose to withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You will have one week to complete the survey from the time you have received this email. If you have any questions related to this project, please contact any of the researchers above. Please be aware that any contact with the researchers that occurs outside of this survey may reveal your identity. This study has been approved by the Clark Committee for the Rights of Human Participants in Research and Training Programs (IRB). Any questions about human rights issues should be directed to the IRB Chair, Dr. James P. Elliott (508-793-7152).

ANONYMOUS SURVEY

Q1 On-Call Status

- ☐ Active (1)
- ☐ Not Active (2)

Q2 Level of Service/Rank

- ☐ Administration (1)
- ☐ Lieutenant (2)
- ☐ Firefighter (3)
- ☐ FF/EMT (4)
- ☐ Other (5)

Q3 Gender

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Other (3)

Q4 Start Age

- ☐ Under 21 (1)
- ☐ 21-25 (2)
- ☐ 26-30 (3)
- ☐ 31-35 (4)
- ☐ 36-40 (5)
- ☐ 41-45 (6)
- ☐ 46-50 (7)
- ☐ 51-55 (8)
- ☐ 56-60 (9)
- ☐ 61-65 (10)

Q5 Years of Service (Total or To-Date)

- ☐ Under 5 years (1)
- ☐ 5-10 years (2)
- ☐ 11-15 years (3)
- ☐ 15-20 years (4)
- ☐ 21-25 years (5)
- ☐ 26-30 years (6)
- ☐ Over 30 (7)

Q6 In how many years do you plan on retiring?

- ☐ 0-5 (1)
- ☐ 6-10 (2)
- ☐ 11-15 (3)
- ☐ 16-20 (4)
- ☐ 21-25 (5)
- ☐ 26-30 (6)
- ☐ Over 30 (7)

Q7 How did you hear about the Grafton Fire Department and the opportunity to join?
(Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Local Newspaper (town) (1)
- ☐ Town website (2)
- ☐ Local or fundraising event (3)
- ☐ Fire station Open House (4)
- ☐ Family Member or Friend (5)
- ☐ Through High School Program (6)
- ☐ Local Business (7)
- ☐ Word-of-mouth (8)
- ☐ Other (9)

Q8 Why did you join the department (primary reason)?

- ☐ Sense of obligation (1)
- ☐ Family/friend part of the department (2)
- ☐ Wanted to give back to the community (3)
- ☐ Meet new people (4)
- ☐ Career in public safety (5)
- ☐ Contact with a firefighter (6)
- ☐ Experienced a personal tragedy (7)
- ☐ Other (8)

Q9 Do you know what is expected from you at work?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q10 Do you have the materials and equipment you need in order to complete your work correctly?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q11 At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q12 Have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q13 Does your supervisor, or someone at work, care for you as a person?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q14 Is there someone at work who encourages your development?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q15 Does the mission or purpose of your organization make you feel that your job is important?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q16 Are your associates or fellow employees committed to doing quality work?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q17 Do you have a best friend at work?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q18 In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q19 Within the last year, have you had the opportunities at work to learn and grow?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ N/A (5)

Q20 I can have in-depth discussions with other fire department members about issues facing the department/company and potential ways to address those issues.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q21 I can talk openly with the Fire Chief about issues faced by the department.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q22 I can talk openly with other leaders about issues faced by the department.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q23 Solutions to department-wide issues and major decisions are arrived at through discussion and consensus, rather than one or two people making decisions for the entire fire department.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q24 Expectations are clearly communicated, and constructive feedback on performance is provided on a regular basis, both informally and formally.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q25 I find the trainings are relevant and valuable to the work we do in the department.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

[illegible]

Q32 What are the most common reasons people leave the Fire Department?

Q33 If you could change one thing that would have the greatest impact on improving employee retention, what would that be?

Q34 Why would you leave the Fire Department?

- ☐ No time due to work/financial obligations (1)
- ☐ No time due to family obligations (Life change) (2)
- ☐ Moved out of Grafton (3)
- ☐ Too much training (4)
- ☐ Not enough training (5)
- ☐ Increased call volume (6)
- ☐ Decreased call volume (7)
- ☐ Conflict within the department/town (8)
- ☐ Personal conflict with members (department politics) (9)
- ☐ Criticism from officers (10)
- ☐ Leadership change (11)
- ☐ Inadequate leadership (12)
- ☐ Under appreciated (13)
- ☐ Not challenging (14)
- ☐ Not rewarding (15)
- ☐ Health and medical issues (16)
- ☐ Retirement (17)
- ☐ Lack of incentives/benefits (18)
- ☐ Lack of equipment (19)
- ☐ Other (20)

Q35 What keeps you motivated to continue being on-call/service for the Grafton Fire Department?

- ☐ Praise and recognition (1)
- ☐ Community service (2)
- ☐ Personal fulfillment/enrichment (3)
- ☐ Fire response (4)
- ☐ Friendship/camaraderie (5)
- ☐ Receiving/Delivering training (6)
- ☐ Strong leadership (7)
- ☐ Social events/activities (8)
- ☐ Appreciation from people (9)
- ☐ Pay/incentives (10)

- ☐ New apparatus (11)
- ☐ Health or dental insurance (12)
- ☐ Other (13)

Q36 In your opinion, what changes or improvements should be made to encourage fire fighters to stay with the department longer?

Q37 Name one thing you wish your supervisor would do or offer you to improve your engagement?

Q38 If you could name one thing that the town could offer you as an employee, what would that be?

Q39 Can you name two things that the town offers you that keeps you with the organization?

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Figure 19. Within the last year, have you had the opportunities at work to learn and grow?

Figure 20. I can have in-depth discussions with other fire department members about issues facing the department/company and potential ways to address those issues.

Figure 21. I can talk openly with the Fire Chief about issues faced by the department.

Figure 22. I can talk openly with other leaders about issues faced by the department.

Figure 23. Solutions to department-wide issues and major decisions are arrived at through discussion and consensus, rather than one or two people making decisions for the entire fire department.

Figure 24. Expectations are clearly communicated, and constructive feedback on performance is provided on a regular basis, both informally and formally.

Figure 25. I find the trainings are relevant and valuable to the work we do in the department.

Figure 26. As a department, we understand and trust one another.

Figure 27. Chief and company leaders actively work towards making everyone feel like an integral part of the team.

Figure 28. I feel that my service is appreciated not just by the department, but by the entire community.

Figure 29. What do you like best about the department?

Figure 30. How much do you enjoy the following activities?

Figure 31. Approximately how much time do you spend performing the following activities?

Figure 31. Approximately how much time do you spend performing the following activities?

Figure 32. What are the most common reasons people leave the Fire Department?

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Figure 34. Why would you leave the Fire Department?

Figure 35. What keeps you motivated to continue being on-call/service for the Grafton Fire Department?

Figure 36. In your opinion, what changes or improvements should be made to encourage fire fighters to stay with the department longer?

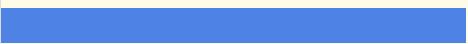

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
D. COMPLETE SURVEY RESULTS

1. On-Call Status

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Active		42	98%
2	Not Active		1	2%
	Total		43	100%

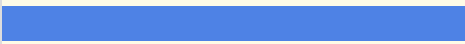
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

2. Level of Service/Rank

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Administration		2	5%
2	Lieutenant		5	12%
3	Firefighter		25	60%
4	FF/EMT		7	17%
5	Other		3	7%
	Total		42	100%









Statistic	Value
Total Responses	42

3. Gender

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Male		42	98%
2	Female		0	0%
3	Other		1	2%
	Total		43	100%







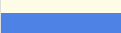
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

4. Start Age

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Under 21		19	44%
2	21-25		3	7%
3	26-30		4	9%
4	31-35		5	12%
5	36-40		4	9%
6	41-45		3	7%
7	46-50		2	5%
8	51-55		0	0%
9	56-60		3	7%
	Total		43	100%







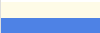
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

5. Years of Service (Total or To-Date)

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Under 5 years		5	12%
2	5-10 years		7	16%
3	11-15 years		9	21%
4	15-20 years		3	7%
5	21-25 years		7	16%
6	26-30 years		1	2%
7	Over 30		11	26%
	Total		43	100%

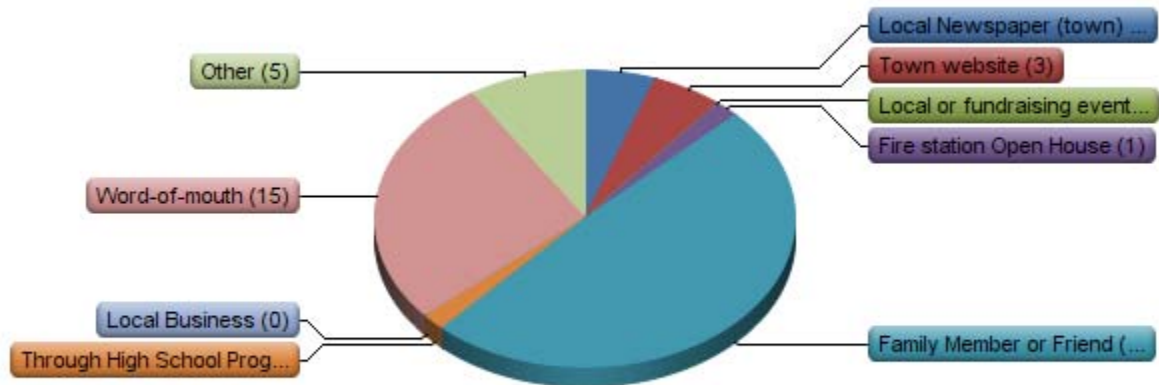
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

6. In how many years do you plan on retiring?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	0-5		9	21%
2	6-10		8	19%
3	11-15		1	2%
4	16-20		4	9%
5	21-25		5	12%
6	26-30		7	16%
7	Over 30		9	21%
	Total		43	100%

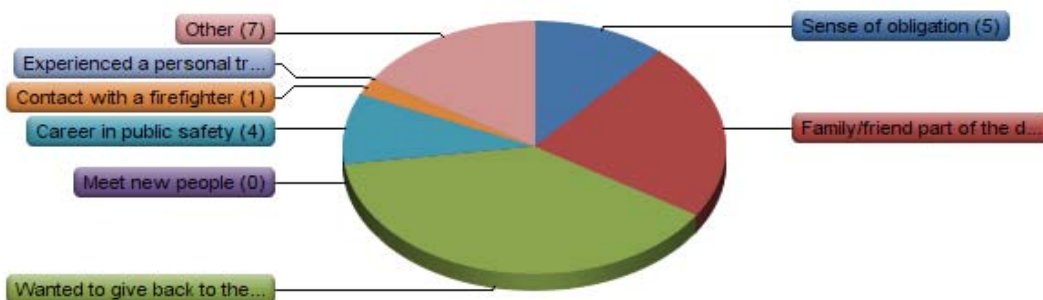
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

7. How did you hear about the Grafton Fire Department and the opportunity to join?




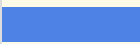

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	44

8. Why did you join the department (primary reason)?






Statistic	Value
Total Responses	44

9. Do you know what is expected from you at work?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		0	0%
2	Rarely		3	7%
3	Sometimes		12	29%
4	Often		26	63%
	Total		41	100%


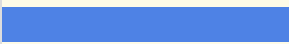

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	41

10. Do you have the materials and equipment you need in order to complete your work correctly?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		0	0%
2	Rarely		1	2%
3	Sometimes		14	33%
4	Often		28	65%
	Total		43	100%



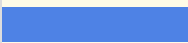

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

11. At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		0	0%
2	Rarely		3	7%
3	Sometimes		26	60%
4	Often		14	33%
	Total		43	100%



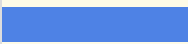

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

12. Have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		4	9%
2	Rarely		14	33%
3	Sometimes		17	40%
4	Often		8	19%
	Total		43	100%



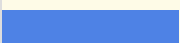

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

13. Does your supervisor, or someone at work, care for you as a person?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		3	7%
2	Rarely		3	7%
3	Sometimes		16	39%
4	Often		19	46%
	Total		41	100%

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	41

14. Is there someone at work who encourages your development?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		8	19%
2	Rarely		9	21%
3	Sometimes		16	37%
4	Often		10	23%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

15. Does the mission or purpose of your organization make you feel that your job is important?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		2	5%
2	Rarely		4	10%
3	Sometimes		10	25%
4	Often		24	60%
	Total		40	100%


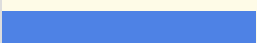

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	40

16. Are your associates or fellow employees committed to doing quality work?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		0	0%
2	Rarely		1	2%
3	Sometimes		7	16%
4	Often		35	81%
	Total		43	100%

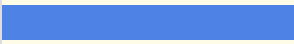



Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

17. Do you have a best friend at work?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		0	0%
2	Rarely		2	7%
3	Sometimes		16	53%
4	Often		12	40%
	Total		30	100%



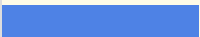

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	30

18. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		26	62%
2	Rarely		10	24%
3	Sometimes		3	7%
4	Often		3	7%
	Total		42	100%






Statistic	Value
Total Responses	42

19. Within the last year, have you had the opportunities at work to learn and grow?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		5	12%
2	Rarely		7	17%
3	Sometimes		17	41%
4	Often		12	29%
	Total		41	100%






Statistic	Value
Total Responses	41

20. I can have in-depth discussions with other fire department members about issues facing the department/company and potential ways to address those issues.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		5	12%
2	Disagree		6	14%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		9	21%
4	Agree		17	40%
5	Strongly Agree		6	14%
	Total		43	100%






Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

21. I can talk openly with the Fire Chief about issues faced by the department.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		11	26%
2	Disagree		12	28%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		5	12%
4	Agree		8	19%
5	Strongly Agree		7	16%
	Total		43	100%

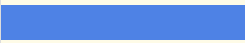




Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

22. I can talk openly with other leaders about issues faced by the department.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		7	16%
2	Disagree		6	14%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		10	23%
4	Agree		15	35%
5	Strongly Agree		5	12%
	Total		43	100%



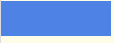


Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

23. Solutions to department-wide issues and major decisions are arrived at through discussion and consensus, rather than one or two people making decisions for the entire fire department.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		22	51%
2	Disagree		7	16%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		5	12%
4	Agree		7	16%
5	Strongly Agree		2	5%
	Total		43	100%






Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

24. Expectations are clearly communicated, and constructive feedback on performance is provided on a regular basis, both informally and formally.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		14	33%
2	Disagree		11	26%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		10	23%
4	Agree		6	14%
5	Strongly Agree		2	5%
	Total		43	100%


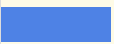

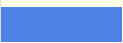
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

25. I find the trainings are relevant and valuable to the work we do in the department.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		5	12%
2	Disagree		4	9%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		8	19%
4	Agree		16	37%
5	Strongly Agree		10	23%
	Total		43	100%



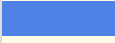


Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

26. As a department, we understand and trust one another.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		0	0%
2	Disagree		9	21%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		10	23%
4	Agree		13	30%
5	Strongly Agree		11	26%
	Total		43	100%



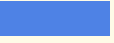


Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

27. Chief and company leaders actively work towards making everyone feel like an integral part of the team.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		10	23%
2	Disagree		7	16%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		11	26%
4	Agree		13	30%
5	Strongly Agree		2	5%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

28. I feel that my service is appreciated not just by the department, but by the entire community.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly disagree		1	2%
2	Disagree		6	14%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		10	23%
4	Agree		19	44%
5	Strongly Agree		7	16%
	Total		43	100%

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

29. What do you like best about the department?

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

30. How much do you enjoy the following activities? (Please drag and drop the items into the appropriate categories and rank items based on how enjoyable they are)

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

31. Approximately how much time do you spend performing the following activities? (Please drag and drop the items into the appropriate categories and rank items based on the amount of time spent on each)

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	43

32. What are the most common reasons people leave the Fire Department?

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	24

33. If you could change one thing that would have the greatest impact on improving employee retention, what would that be?

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	22

34. Why would you leave the Fire Department?

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	34

35. What keeps you motivated to continue being on-call/service for the Grafton Fire Department?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Praise and recognition	0	0%
2	Community service	11	32%
3	Personal fulfillment/enrichment	13	38%
4	Fire response	4	12%
5	Friendship/camaraderie	5	15%
6	Receiving/Delivering training	0	0%
7	Strong leadership	0	0%
8	Social events/activities	0	0%
9	Appreciation from people	1	3%
10	Pay/incentives	0	0%
11	New apparatus	0	0%
12	Health or dental insurance	0	0%
13	Other	0	0%
	Total	34	100%

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	34

36. In your opinion, what changes or improvements should be made to encourage fire fighters to stay with the department longer?

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	24

37. Name one thing you wish your supervisor would do or offer you to improve your engagement?

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	20

38. If you could name one thing that the town could offer you as an employee, what would that be?

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	21

39. Can you name two things that the town offers you that keeps you with the organization?

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	20

E. TOTAL DEPARTMENT BUDGET

FY2015 Fire Department Budgets			
	Spencer	Millbury	Grafton
Department Salaries			
Fire Chief	\$81,016	\$29,907	\$2,000
Assistant Chiefs (4) @ \$3253		\$13,012	
Deputy Chief	\$8,690		
Forestry Warden	N/A	\$2,948	
SEMA Director of Operations	\$2,237	N/A	
Firefighters (72)			\$249,420
Firefighters (62)		\$201,686	
\$3,253 per fireman			
Firefighters (44)	\$92,722		
Lineman (6 hrs/wk @ \$24.29)	included in ff above	\$7,578	
Details (340 hrs @ \$16.40)	included in ff above	\$5,576	
Brush Fire (312 hrs @ \$16.40)	included in ff above	\$5,117	
Inspections	performed by Chief	\$10,000	
Training	included in ff above	included in ff above	\$67,264
Overtime			\$3,241
Administrative (Clerk)			\$57,159
Head Clerk (35 hrs/wk @ \$20.88)		\$38,148	
Floating Hours (meeting/burning)		\$2,098	
Head Clerk (20 hrs/wk @ \$17.13)	\$21,806		
Maintenance (9.5 hrs/wk @ \$12.16)	\$6,007	N/A	N/A
<i>Stipends:</i>			\$8,500
Captains (4 @ \$773)		\$3,092	
Lieutenants (7 @ 402)		\$2,814	
Company Clerks (4 @ 128.25		\$513	
Office Maintenance (1 @ \$200)		\$200	
Head Clerk Longevity (1 @ \$400)		\$400	
Longevity			\$2,011
Total Salaries:	\$212,478	\$323,089	\$389,595

FY2015 Fire Department Budgets			
	Spencer	Millbury	Grafton
Department Expenses			
Backflow (pump) Testing	\$3,500	\$400	N/A
Rubbish Removal	in Police Contract	\$850	N/A
<i>Utilities:</i>			\$30,400
Water or Sewer	\$600	\$800	
Heat	\$19,300	\$13,000	
Electric	\$15,000	\$6,000	
Telephone/Internet/Cell/Toning	\$4,740	\$9,000	\$7,000
Building Supplies/Repairs	\$7,000	\$11,000	\$10,000
Equipment Supplies/Repairs	\$27,427	\$24,000	\$22,088
Apparatus Repairs	\$48,340	\$45,000	\$25,000
Radio Supplies/Repairs	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$15,000
Fit Testing/Physcials	\$1,250	in Training?	\$2,500
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$8,800	broken down below	\$8,000
Office Suplies	\$3,000	\$1,800	\$1,800
Custodial Supplies			\$1,500
Personal Supplies			\$7,500
Fire Prevention Program		\$800	
Emergency Fund (food)	\$3,917	\$400	\$500
Copier Maintenance Agreement	\$1,041	N/A	N/A
Training (instructors)	N/A	\$12,000	\$11,600
Dues/Memberships/Mileage	\$4,480	\$7,400	\$4,000
Turnout Gear (Millbury - Capital)	\$6,000	\$12,000	\$8,500
Capital (new & replace equip)	\$100,000	N/A	\$91,950
VFIS Insurance (IOD)	\$21,970	in general gov budget	general gov budget
Other (Ambulance/lease)	\$150,000	\$5,000	\$1,100
Total Expenses:	\$430,865	\$151,450	\$248,438

FY2015 Fire Department Budgets			
	Spencer	Millbury	Grafton
Total Department Salaries	\$212,478	\$323,089	\$389,595
Total Department Expenses	\$430,865	\$151,450	\$248,438
Total Budget:	\$643,343	\$474,539	\$638,033

	Spencer	Millbury	Grafton
Department Salaries Comparison			
Fire Chief	\$81,016	\$29,907	\$2,000
Assistant or Deputy (per)	\$8,690	\$3,253	N/A
Firefighters (total)	\$92,722	\$201,686	\$249,420
Other FF (training, details, etc.)	N/A	\$28,271	\$70,505
Head Clerk	\$21,806	\$40,826	\$57,159
Other/Fringe (stipends)	N/A	\$7,019	\$10,511
Comparable Costs	\$204,234	\$310,962	\$389,595
Department Expenses Comparison			
Utilities	\$34,900	\$19,800	\$30,400
Communications (Inet/Phone,etc)	\$4,740	\$9,000	\$7,000
Building R&M	\$7,000	\$11,000	\$10,000
Equipment R&M	\$27,427	\$24,000	\$22,088
Apparatuses R&M	\$48,340	\$45,000	\$25,000
Radio R&M	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$15,000
Training (Instructors)	N/A	\$12,000	\$11,600
Fit Testing/Physcials	\$1,250	in Training?	\$2,500
Office Supplies/Misc. Expenses	\$16,758	\$3,000	\$19,300
Emergency Fund	\$3,917	\$400	\$500
Dues/Memberships/Mileage	\$4,480	\$7,400	\$4,000
Turnout Gear	\$6,000	\$12,000	\$8,500
Comparable Costs	\$159,312	\$145,600	\$155,888